10,452/13

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

https://archive.org/details/b30518726

THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

A

POEM.

The FIFTH EDITION.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION,

A

POEM.

THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

A POEM.

In THREE BOOKS.

By Dr. AKENSIDE.

LONDON:

Printed for R. DODSLEY at Tully's Head in Pall-mall.

M DCC LIV.

The DESIGN.

THERE are certain powers in human nature which ſeem to hold a middle place between the organs of bodily ſenſe and the faculties of moral perception: They have been call'd by a very general name, THE POWERS OF IMAGINATION. *Like the external ſenſes, they relate to matter and motion; and at the ſame time, give the mind ideas analogous to thoſe of moral approbation and diſlike. As they are the inlets of ſome of the moſt exquiſite pleaſures with which we are acquainted, it has naturally happened that men of warm and ſenſible tempers have ſought means to recall the delightful perceptions which they afford, independent of the objects which originally produc'd them. This gave riſe to the imitative or deſigning arts; ſome of which, as painting and ſculpture, directly copy the external appearances which were admir'd in nature; others, as muſic and poetry, bring them back to remembrance by ſigns univerſally eſtabliſh'd and underſtood.*

But theſe arts, as they grew more correct and deliberate, were of courſe led to extend their imitation beyond the peculiar objects of the imaginative powers; eſpecially poetry, which making uſe of language as the inſtrument by which it imitates, is conſequently become an unlimited repreſentative of every ſpecies and mode of being. Yet as their primary intention was only to expreſs the objects of imagination, and as they ſtill abound chiefly in ideas of that claſs, they of courſe retain their original character, and all the different pleaſures which they excite, are term'd, in general, PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

The deſign of the following poem is to give a view of theſe *in the largeſt acceptation of the term*; ſo that whatever our imagination feels from the agreeable appearances of nature, and all the various entertainment we meet with either in poetry, painting, muſic, or any of the elegant arts, might be deducible from one or other of thoſe principles in the conſtitution of the human mind, which are here eſtabliſh'd and explain'd.

In executing this general plan, it was neceſſary firſt of all to diſtinguiſh the Imagination from our other

other faculties; and in the next place to characterize thoſe original forms or properties of being about which it is converſant, and which are by nature adapted to it, as light is to the eyes, or truth to the underſtanding. Theſe properties Mr. Addiſon *had reduced to the three general claſſes of greatneſs, novelty, and beauty; and into theſe we may analyſe every object, however complex, which, properly ſpeaking, is delightful to the imagination. But ſuch an object may alſo include many other ſources of pleaſure, and its beauty, or novelty, or grandeur, will make a ſtronger impreſſion by reaſon of this concurrence. Beſides which, the imitative arts, eſpecially poetry, owe much of their effect to a* ſimilar *exhibition of properties quite* foreign *to the imagination, inſomuch that in every line of the moſt applauded poems, we meet with either ideas drawn from the external ſenſes, or truths diſcover'd to the underſtanding, or illuſtrations of contrivance and final cauſes, or above all the reſt, with circumſtances proper to awaken and ingage the paſſions. It was therefore neceſſary to enumerate and exemplify theſe different ſpecies of pleaſure; eſpecially that from the paſſions, which as it is ſupreme in the nobleſt works of human genius, ſo being in ſome particulars not*

a little ſurprizing, gave an opportunity to enliven the didactic turn of the poem, by introducing an allegory to account for the appearance.

After theſe parts of the ſubject which hold chiefly of admiration, or naturally warm and intereſt the mind, a pleaſure of a very different nature, that which ariſes from ridicule, came next to be conſider'd. As this is the foundation of the comic manner in all the arts, and has been but very imperfectly treated by moral writers, it was thought proper to give it a particular illuſtration, and to diſtinguiſh the general ſources from which the ridicule of characters is deriv'd. Here too a change of ſtile became neceſſary; ſuch a one as might yet be conſiſtent, if poſſible, with the general taſte of compoſition in the ſerious parts of the ſubject: nor is it an eaſy taſk to give any tolerable force to images of this kind, without running either into the gigantic expreſſions of the mock-heroic, or the familiar and poetical raillery of profeſs'd ſatire; neither of which would have been proper here.

The materials of all imitation being thus laid open, nothing now remain'd but to illuſtrate ſome particular

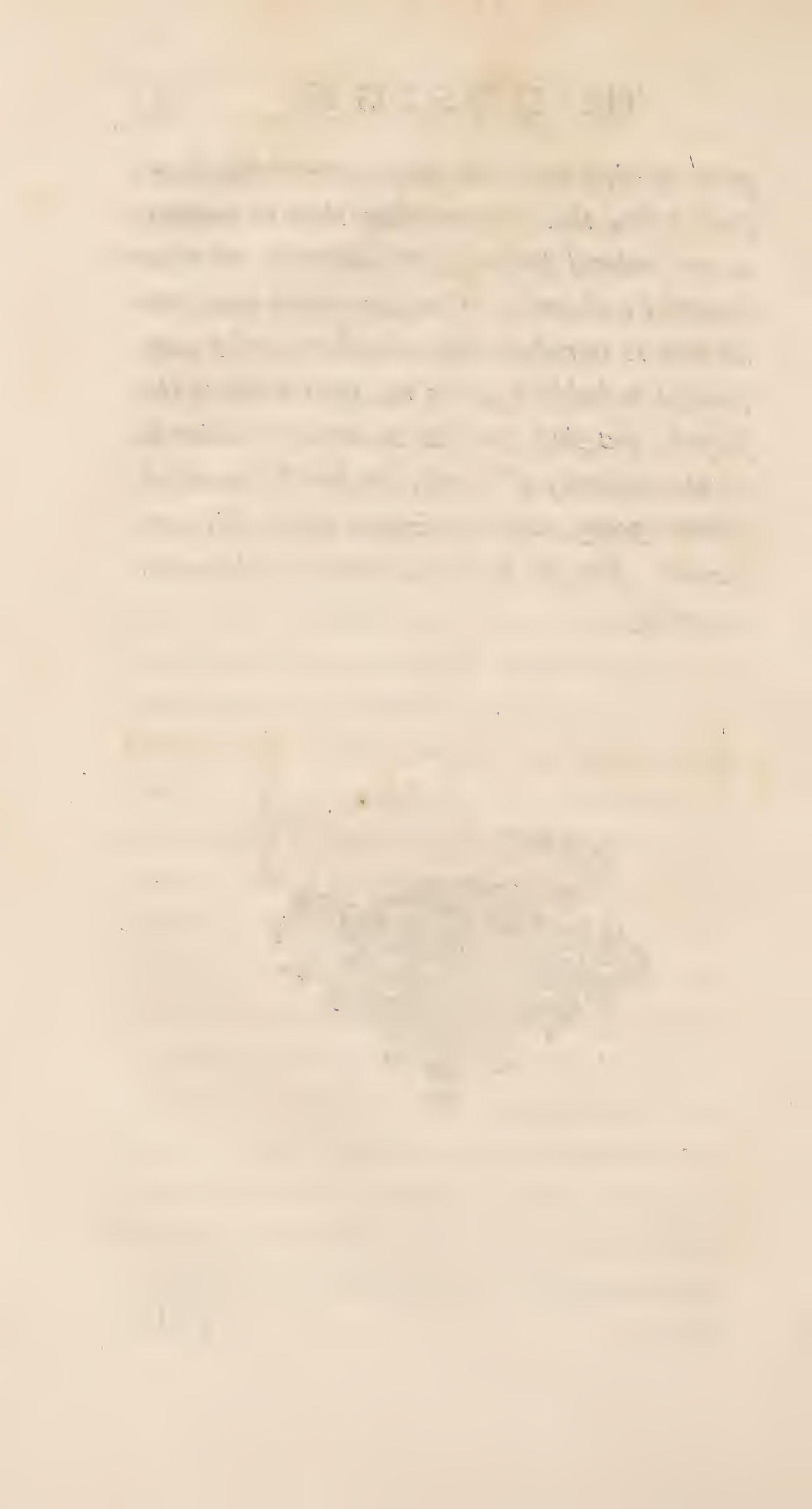
particular pleaſures which ariſe either from the relations of different objects one to another, or from the nature of imitation itſelf. Of the firſt kind is that various and complicated reſemblance exiſting between ſeveral parts of the material and immaterial worlds, which is the foundation of metaphor and wit. As it ſeems in a great meaſure to depend on the early aſſociation of our ideas, and as this habit of aſſociating is the ſource of many pleaſures and pains in life, and on that account bears a great ſhare in the influence of poetry and the other arts, it is therefore mention'd here and its effects deſcrib'd. Then follows a general account of the production of theſe elegant arts, and of the ſecondary pleaſure, as it is call'd, ariſing from the reſemblance of their imitations to the original appearances of nature. After which, the work concludes with ſome reflections on the general conduct of the powers of imagination, and on their natural and moral uſefulneſs in life.

Concerning the matter or turn of compoſition which prevails in this piece, little can be ſaid with propriety by the author. He had two models; that antient and ſimple one of the firſt Græcian *poets, as it is refined by* Virgil *in the* Georgics,

Georgics, *and the familiar epiſtolary way of* Horace. *This latter has ſeveral advantages. It admits of a greater variety of ſtile; it more readily ingages the generality of readers, as partaking more of the air of converſation; and eſpecially with the aſſiſtance of rhyme, leads to a cloſer and more conciſe expreſſion. Add to this the example of the moſt perfect of modern poets, who has ſo happily applied this manner to the nobleſt parts of philoſophy, that the public taſte is in a great meaſure form'd to it alone. Yet, after all, the ſubject before us tending almoſt conſtantly to admiration and enthuſiaſm, ſeem'd rather to demand a more open, pathetic and figur'd ſtile. This too appear'd more natural, as the author's aim was not ſo much to give formal precepts, or enter into the way of direct argumentation, as by exhibiting the moſt ingaging proſpects of nature, to enlarge and harmonize the imagination, and by that means inſenſibly diſpoſe the minds of men to a ſimilar taſte and habit of thinking in religion, morals, and civil life. 'Tis on this account that he is ſo careful to point out the benevolent intention of the author of nature iu every principle of the human conſtitution here inſiſted on; and alſo to unite the moral excellencies of life in the ſame*

point

point of view with the meer external objects of good taſte; thus recommending them in common to our natural propenſity for admiring what is beautiful and lovely. The ſame views have alſo led him to introduce ſome ſentiments which may perhaps be look'd upon as not quite direct to the ſubject; but ſince they bear an obvious relation to it, the authority of Virgil, *the faultleſs model of didactic poetry, will beſt ſupport him in this particular. For the ſentiments themſelves he makes no apology.*



THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK the FIRST.

ARGUMENT of the FIRST BOOK.

THE subject propos'd; verse 1. *to* 30. *Difficulty of treating it poetically*; v. 45. *The ideas of the divine mind, the origin of every quality pleasing to the imagination*; v. 56, *to* 78. *The natural variety of constitution in the minds of men, with its final cause*; *to* v. 96. *The idea of a fine imagination, and the state of the mind in the enjoyment of those pleasures which it affords*; v. 100, *to* 132. *All the primary pleasures of the imagination result from the perception of greatness, or wonderfulness, or beauty in objects*; v. 145. *The pleasure from greatness with its final cause*; v. 151, *to* 221. *Pleasure from novelty or wonderfulness, with its final cause*; v. 222, *to* 270. *Pleasure from beauty, with its final cause*; v. 275, *to* 372. *The connection of beauty with truth and good, applied to the conduct of life*; v. 384. *Invitation to the study of moral philosophy*; *to* v. 428. *The different degrees of beauty in different species of objects*; v. 448. *Colour*; *shape*; *natural concretes*; *vegetables*; *animals*; *the mind*; v. 445, *to* 475. *The sublime, the fair, the wonderful of the mind*; v. 197, *to* 526. *The connection of the imagination and the moral faculty*; v. 557. *Conclusion.*

THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK the FIRST.

WITH what attractive charms this goodly frame
Of nature touches the conſenting hearts
Of mortal men; and what the pleaſing ſtores
Which beauteous imitation thence derives
To deck the poet's, or the painter's toil;
My verſe unfolds. Attend, ye gentle POW'RS

OF

Of Musical Delight! and while I ſing
Your gifts, your honours, dance around my ſtrain.
Thou, ſmiling queen of every tuneful breaſt,
Indulgent Fancy! from the fruitful banks
Of Avon, whence thy roſy fingers cull
Freſh flow'rs and dews to ſprinkle on the turf
Where *Shakeſpeare* lies, be preſent: and with thee
Let Fiction come, upon her fragrant wings
Wafting ten thouſand colours thro' the air,
* Which, by the glances of her magic eye,
She blends and ſhifts at will thro' countleſs forms, *
Her wild creation. Goddeſs of the lyre,
Which rules the accents of the moving ſphere,
Wilt thou, eternal Harmony! deſcend,
And join this feſtive train? for with thee comes
The guide, the guardian of their lovely ſports,
Majeſtic Truth; and where Truth deigns to come,
Her ſiſter Liberty will not be far.
Be preſent all ye Genii who conduct
The wand'ring footſteps of the youthful bard,
New to your ſprings and ſhades: who touch his ear
With finer ſounds: who heighten to his eye

The

grant

* *And, by the glances of her magic eye,*
Combining each in endleſs, fairy forms, *

Line 7.) *The word muſical is here taken in its original and moſt extenſive import; comprehending as well the pleaſures we receive from the beauty or magnificence of natural objects, as thoſe which ariſe from poetry, painting, muſic,*

The bloom of nature, and before him turn
The gayeſt, happieſt attitude of things.

Oft have the laws of each poetic ſtrain
The critic-verſe imploy'd; yet ſtill unſung
Lay this prime ſubject, tho' importing moſt
A poet's name: for fruitleſs is th' attempt,
By dull obedience and by creeping toil
Obſcure, to conquer the ſevere aſcent
Of high Parnaſſus. Nature's kindling breath
Muſt fire the choſen genius; nature's hand
Muſt ſtring his nerves, and imp his eagle-wings
Impatient of the painful ſteep, to ſoar
High as the ſummit: there to breathe at large
Ætherial air; with bards and ſages old,
Immortal ſons of praiſe. Theſe flatt'ring ſcenes
To this neglected labour court my ſong;
Yet not unconſcious what a doubtful taſk
To paint the finest features of the mind,
And to moſt ſubtile and myſterious things
Give colour, ſtrength and motion. But the love
Of nature and the muſes bids explore,

music, or any other of the elegant and imaginative arts; In which sense it has been already used in our language by writers of unquestionable authority.

Line 45.) Lucret. lib. 2. v. 924.

Nec me animi fallit quam sint obscura, sed acri
Percussit thyrso laudis spes magna meum cor

Thro' ſecret paths erewhile untrod by man,
The fair poetic region, to detect
Untaſted ſprings, to drink inſpiring draughts,
And ſhade my temples with unfading flow'rs
Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound receſs,
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before.

From heav'n my ſtrains begin; from heav'n deſcends
The flame of genius to the human breaſt,
And love and beauty, and poetic joy
And inſpiration. Ere the radiant ſun
Sprang from the eaſt, or 'mid the vault of night
The moon ſuſpended her ſerener lamp;
Ere mountains, woods, or ſtreams adorn'd the globe,
Or wiſdom taught the ſons of men her lore;
Then liv'd th' almighty ONE: then deep retir'd
In his unfathom'd eſſence, view'd the forms,
The forms eternal of created things;
The radiant ſun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains, woods and ſtreams, the rolling globe,
And wiſdom's mien cœleſtial. From the firſt
Of days, on them his love divine he fix'd,

His

Et simul incepit suavem mihi ingerere amorem
Musarum; quæ nunc instinctu mente vigenti
Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo: juvat integros accedere fontes,
Atque haurire; juvatque novos decerpere flores;
Insignem meo capiti petere inde coronam,
Unde prius nulli velarint tempora Musæ.

His admiration: till in time compleat,
What he admir'd and lov'd, his vital ſmile
Unfolded into being. Hence the breath
Of life informing each organic frame,
Hence the green earth, and wild reſounding waves;
Hence light and ſhade alternate; warmth and cold;
And clear autumnal ſkies and vernal ſhow'rs,
And all the fair variety of things.

But not alike to every mortal eye
Is this great ſcene unveil'd. For ſince the claims
Of ſocial life, to diff'rent labours urge
The active pow'rs of man; with wiſe intent
The hand of nature on peculiar minds
Imprints a diff'rent byaſs, and to each
Decrees its province in the common toil.
To ſome ſhe taught the fabric of the ſphere,
The changeful moon, the circuit of the ſtars,
The golden zones of heav'n: to ſome ſhe gave
To weigh the moment of eternal things,
Of time, and ſpace, and fate's unbroken chain,
And will's quick impulſe: others by the hand

She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
What healing virtue ſwells the tender veins
Of herbs and flow'rs; or what the beams of morn
Draw forth, diſtilling from the clifted rind
In balmy tears. But ſome, to higher hopes
Were deſtin'd; ſome within a finer mould
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame.
To theſe the ſire omnipotent unfolds
The world's harmonious volume, there to read
The tranſcript of himſelf. On every part
They trace the bright impreſſions of his hand:
In earth or air, the meadow's purple ſtores,
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form
Blooming with roſy ſmiles they ſee portray'd
That uncreated beauty, which delights
The mind ſupreme. *They* alſo feel her charms,
Enamour'd; *they* partake th' eternal joy.

For as old Memnon's image, long renown'd
By fabling Nilus, to the quiv'ring touch
Of Titan's ray, with each repulſive ſtring
Conſenting, ſounded thro' the warbling air

Unbidden

Unbidden ſtrains; even ſo did nature's hand
To certain ſpecies of eternal things,
Attune the finer organs of the mind:
So the glad impulſe of congenial pow'rs,
Or of ſweet ſound, or fair proportion'd form,
The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
Thrills thro' imagination's tender frame,
From nerve to nerve: all naked and alive
They catch the ſpreading rays: till now the ſoul
At length diſcloſes every tuneful ſpring,
To that harmonious movement from without
Reſponſive. Then the inexpreſſive ſtrain
Diffuſes its inchantment: fancy dreams
Of ſacred fountains and Elyſian groves,
And vales of bliſs: the intellectual pow'r
Bends from his awful throne a wond'ring ear,
And ſmiles: the paſſions gently ſooth'd away,
Sink to divine repoſe, and love and joy
Alone are waking; love and joy, ſerene
As airs that fan the ſummer. O! attend,
Whoe'er thou art, whom theſe delights can touch,
Whoſe candid boſom the refining love
Of nature warms, O! liſten to my ſong;

And I will guide thee to her fav'rite walks,
And teach thy ſolitude her voice to hear,
And point her lovelieſt features to thy view.

Know then, whate'er of nature's pregnant ſtores,
Whate'er of mimic art's reflected forms
With love and admiration thus inflame
The pow'rs of fancy, her delighted ſons
To three illuſtrious orders have referr'd;
Three ſiſter-graces, whom the painter's hand,
The poet's tongue confeſſes; the *ſublime*,
The *wonderful*, the *fair*. I ſee them dawn!
I ſee the radiant viſions, where they riſe,
More lovely than when Lucifer diſplays
His beaming forehead thro' the gates of morn,
To lead the train of Phœbus and the ſpring.

Say, why was man ſo eminently rais'd
Amid the vaſt creation; why ordain'd

Thro'

Say, why was man, &c.] In apologizing for the frequent negligences of the ſublimeſt authors of *Greece*, *Thoſe god-like geniuſes*, ſays *Longinus*, *were well aſſured, that nature had not intended*

Thro' life and death to dart his piercing eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;
But that th' Omnipotent might ſend him forth
In ſight of mortal and immortal pow'rs,
As on a boundleſs theatre, to run
The great career of juſtice; to exalt
His gen'rous aim to all diviner deeds;
To chaſe each partial purpoſe from his breaſt;
And thro' the miſts of paſſion and of ſenſe,

---

intended man for a low-ſpirited or ignoble being: but bringing us into life and the midſt of this wide univerſe, as before a multitude aſſembled at ſome heroic ſolemnity that we might be ſpectators of all her magnificence, and candidates high in emulation for the prize of glory; ſhe has therefore implanted in our ſouls an inextinguiſhable love of every thing great and exalted, of every thing which appears divine beyond our comprehenſion. Whence it comes to paſs, that even the whole world is not an object ſufficient for the depth and rapidity of human imagination, which often ſallies forth beyond the limits of all that ſurround us. Let any man caſt his eye through the whole circle of our exiſtence, and conſider how eſpecially it abounds in excellent and grand objects, he will ſoon acknowledge for what enjoyments and purſuits we were deſtin'd. Thus by the very propenſity of nature we are led to admire, not little ſprings or ſhallow rivulets, however clear and delicious, but the Nile, the Rhine, the Danube, and much more than all, the Ocean, &c. Dionyſ. Longin. de Sublim. §. xxiv.

And thro' the toſſing tide of chance and pain,
To hold his courſe unfalt'ring, while the voice
Of truth and virtue, up the ſteep aſcent
Of nature, calls him to his high reward,
Th' applauding ſmile of heav'n? Elſe wherefore burns
In mortal boſoms this unquenched hope,
That breathes from day to day ſublimer things,
And mocks poſſeſſion? wherefore darts the mind,
With ſuch reſiſtleſs ardour to embrace
Majeſtic forms; impatient to be free,
Spurning the groſs controul of wilful might;
Proud of the ſtrong contention of her toils;
Proud to be daring? Who but rather turns
To heav'n's broad fire his unconſtrained view,
Than to the glimmering of a waxen flame?
Who that, from Alpine heights, his lab'ring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon, to ſurvey
Nilus or Ganges rowling his bright wave
Thro'mountains,plains,thro'empiresblackwithſhade,
And continents of ſand; will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a ſcanty rill
That murmurs at his feet? The high-born ſoul

Diſdains

Diſdains to reſt her heav'n-aſpiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tir'd of earth
And this diurnal ſcene, ſhe ſprings aloft
Thro' fields of air; purſues the flying ſtorm;
Rides on the volley'd lightning thro' the heav'ns;
Or yok'd with whirlwinds and the northern blaſt,
Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high ſhe ſoars
The blue profound, and hovering round the ſun
Beholds him pouring the redundant ſtream
Of light; beholds his unrelenting ſway
Bend the reluctant planets to abſolve
The fated rounds of time. Thence far effus'd
She darts her ſwiftneſs up the long career
Of devious comets; thro' its burning ſigns
Exulting meaſures the perennial wheel
Of nature, and looks back on all the ſtars,
Whoſe blended light, as with a milky zone,
Inveſts the orient. Now amaz'd ſhe views
Th' empyreal waſte, where happy ſpirits hold,
Beyond

Th' empyreal waſte.] *Ne ſe peut-il point qu'l y a un grand eſpace audelà de la region de etoiles? Que ce ſoit le ciel empyreé, ou*

Beyond this concave heav'n, their calm abode;
And fields of radiance, whoſe unfading light
Has travell'd the profound ſix thouſand years,
Nor yet arrives in ſight of mortal things.
Ev'n on the barriers of the world untir'd
She meditates th' eternal depth below;
Till, half recoiling, down the headlong ſteep
She plunges; ſoon o'erwhelm'd and ſwallow'd up
In that immenſe of being. There her hopes
Reſt at the fated goal. For from the birth
Of mortal man, the ſovereign Maker ſaid,
That not in humble nor in brief delight
Not in the fading echoes of renown,
Pow'r's purple robes, nor pleaſure's flow'ry lap,

---

ou non, toûjours cet eſpace immenſe qui environne toute cette region, pourra être rempli de bonheur & de gloire. Il pourra être conçu comme l'ocean, où ſe rendent les fleuves de toutes les creatures bienheureuſes, quand elles ſeront venues à leur perfection dans le ſyſtême de etoiles. Leibnitz dans la Theodicée, part. i. §. 19.

Whoſe unfading light, &c.] It was a notion of the great Mr. *Huygens*, that there may be fixed ſtars at ſuch a diſtance from our ſolar ſyſtem, as that their light ſhould not have had time to reach us, even from the creation of the world to this day.

The

The ſoul ſhould find enjoyment: but from theſe
Turning diſdainful to an equal good,
Thro' all th' aſcent of things inlarge her view,
Till every bound at length ſhould diſappear,
And infinite perfection cloſe the ſcene.

Call now to mind what high capacious pow'rs
Lie folded up in man; how far beyond
The praiſe of mortals, may th' eternal growth
Of nature to perfection half divine,
Expand the blooming ſoul? What pity then
Should ſloth's unkindly fogs depreſs to earth
Her tender bloſſom; choak the ſtreams of life,
And blaſt her ſpring! Far otherwiſe deſign'd
Almighty wiſdom; nature's happy cares
Th' obedient heart far otherwiſe incline.
Witneſs the ſprightly joy when aught unknown
Strikes the quick ſenſe, and wakes each active pow'r
To briſker meaſures: witneſs the neglect
Of all familiar proſpects, tho' beheld

With

——————*the neglect*
Of all familiar proſpects, &c.] It is here ſaid, that in conſequence

With tranſport once; the fond attentive gaze
Of young aſtoniſhment; the ſober zeal

Of

ſequence of the love of novelty, objects which at firſt were highly delightful to the mind, loſe that effect by repeated attention to them. But the inſtance of *habit* is oppos'd to this obſervation; for *there*, objects at firſt diſtaſteful are in time render'd intirely agreeable by repeated attention.

The difficulty in this caſe will be removed, if we conſider, that when objects at firſt agreeable, loſe that influence by frequently recurring, the mind is wholly *paſſive*, and the perception *involuntary*; but habit, on the other hand, generally ſuppoſes *choice* and *activity* accompanying it; ſo that the pleaſure ariſes here not from the object, but from the mind's *conſcious* determination of its own activity; and conſequently increaſes in proportion to the frequency of that determination.

It will ſtill be urged perhaps, that a familiarity with diſagreeable objects renders them at length acceptable, even when there is no room for the mind to *reſolve* or *act* at all. In this caſe, the appearance muſt be accounted for, one of theſe ways.

The pleaſure from habit may be meerly negative. The object at firſt gave uneaſineſs: this uneaſineſs gradually wears off as the object grows familiar: and the mind finding it at laſt intirely removed, reckons its ſituation really pleaſurable, compar'd with what it had experienced before.

The diſlike conceiv'd of the object at firſt, might be owing to prejudice or want of attention. Conſequently the mind being neceſſitated to review it often, may at length perceive its own miſtake, and be reconcil'd to what it had look'd on with averſion. In which caſe, a ſort of inſtinctive juſtice naturally leads

it

Of age, commenting on prodigious things.
For ſuch the bounteous providence of heav'n,
In every breaſt implanting this deſire
Of objects new and ſtrange, to urge us on
With unremitted labour to purſue
Thoſe ſacred ſtores that wait the ripening ſoul,
In truth's exhauſtleſs boſom. What need words

---

it to make amends for the injury, by running toward the other extreme of fondneſs and attachment.

Or laſtly, tho' the object itſelf ſhould always continue diſagreeable, yet circumſtances of pleaſure or good fortune may occur along with it. Thus an aſſociation may ariſe in the mind, and the object never be remember'd without thoſe pleaſing circumſtances attending it; by which means the diſagreeable impreſſion which it at firſt occaſion'd will in time be quite obliterated.

——*this deſire*

Of objects new *and* ſtrange——] Theſe two ideas are oft confounded; tho' it is evident the meer *novelty* of an object makes it agreeable, even where the mind is not affected with the leaſt degree of *wonder*: whereas *wonder* indeed always implies *novelty*, being never excited by common or well-known appearances. But the pleaſure in both caſes is explicable from the ſame final cauſe, the acquiſition of knowledge and inlargement of our views of nature: on this account it is natural to treat of them together.

To paint its pow'r? For this, the daring youth
Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,
In foreign climes to rove: the penſive ſage
Heedleſs of ſleep, or midnight's harmful damp,
Hangs o'er the ſickly taper; and untir'd
The virgin follows, with inchanted ſtep,
The mazes of ſome wiſe and wondrous tale,
From morn to eve; unmindful of her form,
Unmindful of the happy dreſs that ſtole
The wiſhes of the youth, when every maid
With envy pin'd. Hence finally, by night
The village-matron, round the blazing hearth,
Suſpends the infant-audience with her tales,
Breathing aſtoniſhment! of witching rhimes,
And evil ſpirits; of the death-bed call
Of him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd
The orphan's portion; of unquiet ſouls
Ris'n from the grave to eaſe the heavy guilt
Of deeds in life conceal'd; of ſhapes that walk
At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave
The torch of hell around the murd'rer's bed.
At every ſolemn pauſe the croud recoil

Gazing

Gazing each other ſpeechleſs, and congeal'd
With ſhiv'ring ſighs: till eager for th' event,
Around the beldame all arrect they hang,
Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.

But lo! diſclos'd in all her ſmiling pomp,
Where Beauty onward moving claims the verſe
Her charms inſpire: the freely-flowing verſe
In thy immortal praiſe, O form divine,
Smooths her mellifluent ſtream. Thee, Beauty, thee
The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray
The moſſy roofs adore: thou, better ſun!
For ever beameſt on th' enchanted heart
Love, and harmonious number, and delight
Poetic. Brighteſt progeny of heav'n!
How ſhall I trace thy features? where ſelect
The roſeate hues to emulate thy bloom?
Haſte then, my ſong, thro' nature's wide expanſe,
Haſte then, and gather all her comelieſt wealth,
Whate'er bright ſpoils the florid earth contains,
Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,
To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly

With

With laughing Autumn to th' Atlantic iſles,
And range with him th' Heſperian field, and ſee,
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,
The branches ſhoot with gold; where'er his ſtep
Marks the glad ſoil, the tender cluſters grow
With purple ripeneſs, and inveſt each hill
As with the bluſhes of an evening ſky?
Or wilt thou rather ſtoop thy vagrant plume,
Where, gliding thro' his daughter's honour'd ſhades,
The ſmooth Penéus from his glaſſy flood
Reflects purpureal Tempe's pleaſant ſcene?
Fair Tempe! haunt belov'd of ſylvan powers,
Of nymphs and fauns; where in the golden age
They play'd in ſecret on the ſhady brink
With ancient Pan: while round their choral ſteps
Young hours and genial gales with conſtant hand
Show'r'd bloſſoms, odours, ſhow'r'd ambroſial dews,
And ſpring's Elyſian bloom. Her flow'ry ſtore
To thee nor Tempe ſhall refuſe; nor watch
Of winged Hydra guard Heſperian fruits
From thy free ſpoil. O bear then, unreprov'd,
Thy ſmiling treaſures to the green receſs

Where

Where young Dione ſtays. With ſweeteſt airs
Intice her forth to lend her angel-form
For beauty's honour'd image. Hither turn
Thy graceful footſteps; hither, gentle maid,
Incline thy poliſh'd forehead: let thy eyes
Effuſe the mildneſs of their azure dawn;
And may the fanning breezes waft aſide
Thy radiant locks, diſcloſing, as it bends
With airy ſoftneſs from the marble neck,
The cheek fair-blooming, and the roſy lip
Where winning ſmiles and pleaſure ſweet as love,
With ſanctity and wiſdom, temp'ring blend
Their ſoft allurement. Then the pleaſing force
Of nature, and her kind parental care
Worthier I'd ſing: then all th' enamour'd youth,
With each admiring virgin to my lyre
Should throng attentive, while I point on high
Where beauty's living image, like the morn
That wakes in Zephyr's arms the bluſhing May,
Moves onward; or as Venus, when ſhe ſtood
Effulgent on the pearly car, and ſmil'd

Freſh from the deep, and conſcious of her form,
To ſee the Tritons tune their vocal ſhells,
And each cœrulean ſiſter of the flood
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves,
To ſeek th' Idalian bow'r. Ye ſmiling band
Of youths and virgins, who thro' all the maze
Of young deſire with rival-ſteps purſue
This charm of beauty; if the pleaſing toil
Can yield a moment's reſpite, hither turn
Your favourable ear, and truſt my words.
I do not mean to wake the gloomy form
Of ſuperſtition dreſt in wiſdom's garb,
To damp your tender hopes; I do not mean
To bid the jealous thund'rer fire the heav'ns,
Or ſhapes infernal rend the groaning earth
To fright you from your joys: my chearful ſong
With better omens calls you to the field,
Pleas'd with your generous ardour in the chace,
And warm like you. Then tell me, for ye know,
Does beauty ever deign to dwell where health
And active uſe are ſtrangers? Is her charm

Confeſs'd

Confeſs'd in aught, whoſe moſt peculiar ends
Are lame and fruitleſs? Or did nature mean
This pleaſing call the herald of a lye;
To hide the ſhame of diſcord and diſeaſe,
And catch with fair hypocriſy the heart
Of idle faith? O no! with better cares
Th' indulgent mother, conſcious how infirm
Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,
By this illuſtrious image, in each kind
Still moſt illuſtrious where the object holds
Its native pow'rs moſt perfect, ſhe by this
Illumes the headſtrong impulſe of deſire,
And ſanctifies his choice. The gen'rous glebe
Whoſe boſom ſmiles with verdure, the clear tract
Of ſtreams delicious to the thirſty ſoul,
The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to ſenſe,
And every charm of animated things,
Are only pledges of a ſtate ſincere,
Th' integrity and order of their frame,
When all is well within, and every end
Accompliſh'd. Thus was beauty ſent from heav'n,
The lovely miniſtreſs of truth and good

In this dark world: for truth and good are one,
And beauty dwells in them, and they in her,
With

———*Truth and good are one,*
And beauty dwells in them, &c.] *Do you imagine,* ſays *Socrates* to *Ariſtippus, that what is good is not alſo beautiful? Have you not obſerved that theſe appearances always coincide? Virtue, for inſtance, in the ſame reſpect as to which we call it good, is ever acknowledg'd to be beautiful alſo. In the characters of men we always* join the two denominations together. The beauty of human bodies correſponds, in like manner, with that œconomy of parts which conſtitutes them good; and in every circumſtance of life, the ſame object is conſtantly accounted both beautiful and good, inaſmuch as it anſwers the purpoſes for which it was deſign'd.* Xenophont. memorab. Socrat. l. 3. c. 8.

This excellent obſervation has been illuſtrated and extended by the noble reſtorer of ancient philoſophy; *ſee the Characteriſticks,* vol. 2. p. 339 & 422. & vol. 3. p. 181. And another ingenious author has particularly ſhewn, that it holds in the general laws of nature, in the works of art, and the conduct of the ſciences. *Inquiry into the original of our ideas of beauty and virtue, Treat.* 1. §. 8. As to the connection between *beauty* and *truth,* there are two opinions concerning it. Some philoſophers aſſert an independent and invariable law in nature, in conſequence of which *all rational beings muſt alike perceive beauty*

* This the *Athenians* did in a peculiar manner by the word καλοκαγαθοὶ & καλοκαγαθία.

With like participation. Wherefore then,
O ſons of earth! would ye diſſolve the tye?

---

beauty in ſome certain proportions, and deformity in the contrary. And this neceſſity being ſuppoſed the ſame with that which commands the aſſent or diſſent of the underſtanding, it follows of courſe that *beauty* is founded on the univerſal and unchangeable law of *truth*.

But others there are who believe *beauty* to be meerly a relative and arbitrary thing; that indeed it was a benevolent proviſion in nature to annex ſo delightful a ſenſation to thoſe objects which are *beſt and moſt perfect in themſelves*, that ſo we might be ingaged to the choice of them at once and without ſtaying to infer their *uſefulneſs* from their ſtructure and effects; but that it is not impoſſible, in a phyſical ſenſe, that two beings, of equal capacities for *truth*, ſhould perceive, one of them *beauty*, and the other *deformity*, in the ſame proportions. And upon this ſuppoſition by that *truth* which is always connected with *beauty*, nothing more can be meant than the conformity of any object to thoſe proportions upon which, after careful examination, the beauty of that ſpecies is found to depend. *Polycletus*, for inſtance, a famous ancient ſculptor, from an accurate menſuration of the ſeveral parts of the moſt perfect human bodies, deduced a canon or ſyſtem of proportions, which was the rule of all ſucceeding artiſts. Suppoſe a ſtatue modell'd according to this canon: A man of meer natural taſte, upon looking at it, without entering into its proportions, confeſſes and admires its *beauty*; whereas a profeſſor of the art applies his meaſures to the head, the neck, or the hand and, without attending to its beauty, pronounces the workmanſhip to be *juſt* and *true*.

O wherefore, with a raſh impetuous aim,
Seek ye thoſe flow'ry joys with which the hand
Of laviſh fancy paints each flatt'ring ſcene
Where beauty ſeems to dwell, nor once inquire
Where is the ſanction of eternal truth,
Or where the ſeal of undeceitful good,
To ſave your ſearch from folly? Wanting theſe,
Lo! beauty withers in your void imbrace,
And with the glitt'ring of an idiot's toy
Did fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam
Of youthful hope that ſhines upon your hearts,
Be chill'd or clouded at this awful taſk,
To learn the lore of undeceitful good,
And truth eternal. Tho' the pois'nous charms
Of baleful ſuperſtition guide the feet
Of ſervile numbers, thro' a dreary way
To their abode, thro' deſarts, thorns and mire;
And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn
To muſe at laſt, amid the ghoſtly gloom
Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloiſter'd cells;
To walk with ſpectres thro' the midnight ſhade,
And to the ſcreaming owl's accurſed ſong

Attune

Attune the dreadful workings of his heart;
Yet be not ye diſmay'd. A gentle ſtar
Your lovely ſearch illumines. From the grove
Where wiſdom talk'd with her Athenian ſons,
Could my ambitious hand intwine a wreath
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay,
Then ſhould my pow'rful voice at once diſpell
Thoſe monkiſh horrors: then in light divine
Diſcloſe th' Elyſian proſpect, where the ſteps
Of thoſe whom nature charms, thro' blooming walks,
Thro' fragrant mountains and poetic ſtreams,
Amid the train of ſages, heroes, bards,
Led by their winged Genius and the choir
Of laurell'd ſcience and harmonious art,
Proceed exulting to th' eternal ſhrine,
Where truth conſpicuous with her ſiſter-twins,
The undivided partners of her ſway,
With good and beauty reigns. O let not us,
Lull'd by luxurious pleaſure's languid ſtrain,
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot-rage,
O let not us a moment pauſe to join
That godlike band. And if the gracious pow'r
Who firſt awaken'd my untutor'd ſong,

Will to my invocation breathe anew
The tuneful ſpirit; then thro' all our paths,
Ne'er ſhall the ſound of this devoted lyre
Be wanting; whether on the roſy mead,
When ſummer ſmiles, to warn the melting heart
Of luxury's allurement; whether firm
Againſt the torrent and the ſtubborn hill
To urge bold virtue's unremitted nerve,
And wake the ſtrong divinity of ſoul
That conquers chance and fate; or whether ſtruck
For ſounds of triumph, to proclaim her toils
Upon the loſty ſummit, round her brow
To twine the wreathe of incorruptive praiſe;
To trace her hallow'd light thro' future worlds,
And bleſs heav'n's image in the heart of man.

Thus with a faithful aim have we preſum'd,
Advent'rous, to delineate nature's form;
Whether in vaſt, majeſtic pomp array'd,
Or dreſt for pleaſing wonder, or ſerene
In beauty's roſy ſmile. It now remains,
Thro' various being's fair-proportion'd ſcale,
To trace the riſing luſtre of her charms,

From

From their firſt twilight, ſhining forth at length
To full meridian ſplendour. Of degree
The leaſt and lowlieſt, in th' effuſive warmth
Of colours mingling with a random blaze,
Doth beauty dwell. Then higher in the line
And variation of determin'd ſhape,
Where truth's eternal meaſures mark the bound
Of circle, cube, or ſphere. The third aſcent
Unites this varied ſymmetry of parts
With colour's bland allurement; as the pearl
Shines in the concave of its azure bed,
And painted ſhells indent their ſpeckled wreathe.
Then more attractive riſe the blooming forms
Thro' which the breath of nature has infus'd
Her genial pow'r to draw with pregnant veins
Nutritious moiſture from the bounteous earth,
In fruit and ſeed prolific: thus the flow'rs
Their purple honours with the ſpring reſume;
And ſuch the ſtately tree which autumn bends
With bluſhing treaſures. But more lovely ſtill
Is nature's charm, where to the full conſent
Of complicated members, to the bloom
Of colour, and the vital change of growth,

Life's

Life's holy flame and piercing ſenſe are giv'n,
And active motion ſpeaks the temper'd ſoul:
So moves the bird of Juno; ſo the ſteed
With rival ardour beats the duſty plain,
And faithful dogs with eager air of joy
Salute their fellows. Thus doth beauty dwell
There moſt conſpicuous, even in outward ſhape,
Where dawns the high expreſſion of a mind:
By ſteps conducting our inraptur'd ſearch
To that eternal origin, whoſe pow'r,
Thro' all th' unbounded ſymmetry of things,
Like rays effulging from the parent ſun,
This endleſs mixture of her charms diffus'd.
MIND, MIND alone, bear witneſs, earth and heav'n!
The living fountains in itſelf contains
Of beauteous and ſublime: here hand in hand,
Sit paramount the Graces; here inthron'd,
Cœleſtial Venus, with divineſt airs,
Invites the ſoul to never-fading joy.
Look then abroad thro' nature, to the range
Of planets, ſuns, and adamantine ſpheres
Wheeling unſhaken thro' the void immenſe;
And ſpeak, O man! does this capacious ſcene

With half that kindling majeſty dilate
Thy ſtrong conception, as when Brutus roſe
Refulgent from the ſtroke of Cæſar's fate,
Amid the croud of patriots; and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and ſhook his crimſon ſteel,
And bade the father of his country, hail!
For lo! the tyrant proſtrate on the duſt,
And Rome again is free?——Is aught ſo fair
In all the dewy landſcapes of the ſpring,
In the bright eye of Heſper or the morn,
In nature's faireſt forms, is aught ſo fair
As virtuous friendſhip? as the candid bluſh
Of him who ſtrives with fortune to be juſt?
The graceful tear that ſtreams from other's woes?
Or the mild majeſty of private life,
Where peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
The gate; where honour's liberal hands effuſe

As when Brutus roſe, &c.] *Cicero* himſelf deſcribes this fact—*Cæſare interfecto —— ſtatim cruentum altè extollens M. Brutus pugionem, Ciceronem nominatim exclamavit, atque ei recuperatam libertatem eſt gratulatus.* Cic. Philipp. 2. 12.

Unenvy'd

Unenvy'd treaſures, and the ſnowy wings
Of innocence and love protect the ſcene?
Once more ſearch, undiſmay'd, the dark profound
Where nature works in ſecret; view the beds
Of min'ral treaſure, and th' eternal vault
That bounds the hoary ocean; trace the forms
Of atoms moving with inceſſant change
Their elemental round; behold the ſeeds
Of being, and the energy of life
Kindling the maſs with ever-active flame:
Then to the ſecrets of the working mind
Attentive turn; from dim oblivion call
Her fleet, ideal band; and bid them, go!
Break thro' time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour
That ſaw the heav'ns created: then declare
If aught were found in thoſe external ſcenes
To move thy wonder now. For what are all
The forms which brute, unconſcious matter wears,
Greatneſs of bulk, or ſymmetry of parts?
Not reaching to the heart, ſoon feeble grows
The ſuperficial impulſe; dull their charms,
And ſatiate ſoon, and pall the languid eye.
Not ſo the moral ſpecies, nor the pow'rs

Of

Of genius and deſign ; th' ambitious mind
There ſees herſelf : by theſe congenial forms
Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenſer act
She bends her nerve, and meditates well-pleas'd
Her features in the mirror. For of all
Th' inhabitants of earth, to man alone
Creative wiſdom gave to lift his eye
To truth's eternal meaſures ; thence to frame
The ſacred laws of action and of will,
Diſcerning juſtice from unequal deeds,
And temperance from folly. But beyond
This energy of truth, whoſe dictates bind
Aſſenting reaſon, the benignant fire,
To deck the honour'd paths of juſt and good,
Has added bright imagination's rays :
Where virtue riſing from the awful depth
Of truth's myſterious boſom, doth forſake

The

Where virtue riſing from the awful depth
Of truth's myſterious boſom, &c.] According to the opinion of thoſe who aſſert *moral obligation* to be founded on an immutable and univerſal law, and that which is uſually call'd the *moral*

The unadorn'd condition of her birth;
And dreſs'd by fancy in ten thouſand hues,
Aſſumes a various feature, to attract,
With charms reſponſive to each gazer's eye,
The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk,
Th' ingenuous youth whom ſolitude inſpires
With pureſt wiſhes, from the penſive ſhade
Beholds her moving, like a virgin-muſe
That wakes her lyre to ſome indulgent theme
Of harmony and wonder: while among
The herd of ſervile minds, her ſtrenuous form
Indignant flaſhes on the patriot's eye,
And thro' the rolls of memory appeals
To ancient honour, or in act ſerene,
Yet watchful, raiſes the majeſtic ſword
Of publick pow'r, from dark ambition's reach
To guard the ſacred volume of the law.

Genius of ancient Greece! whoſe faithful ſteps
Well-pleas'd I follow thro' the ſacred paths

---

moral ſenſe, to be determin'd by the peculiar temper of the imagination and the earlieſt aſſociations of ideas.

Of

Of nature and of ſcience; nurſe divine
Of all heroic deeds and fair deſires!
O! let the breath of thy extended praiſe
Inſpire my kindling boſom to the height
Of this untempted theme. Nor be my thoughts
Preſumptuous counted, if amid the calm
That ſooths this vernal evening into ſmiles,
I ſteal impatient from the ſordid haunts
Of ſtrife and low ambition, to attend
Thy ſacred preſence in the ſylvan ſhade,
By their malignant footſteps ne'er profan'd.
Deſcend, propitious! to my favour'd eye;
Such in thy mien, thy warm, exalted air,
As when the Perſian tyrant, foil'd and ſtung
With ſhame and deſperation, gnaſh'd his teeth
To ſee thee rend the pageants of his throne;
And at the lightning of thy lifted ſpear
Crouch'd like a ſlave. Bring all thy martial ſpoils,
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal ſongs,
Thy ſmiling band of arts, thy godlike ſires
Of civil wiſdom, thy heroic youth
Warm from the ſchools of glory. Guide my way

Thro'

Thro' fair Lycéum's walk, the green retreats
Of Academus, and the thymy vale,
Where oft inchanted with Socratic ſounds,
Iliſſus pure devolv'd his tuneful ſtream
In gentler murmurs. From the blooming ſtore
Of theſe auſpicious fields, may I unblam'd
Tranſplant ſome living bloſſoms to adorn
My native clime: while far above the flight
Of fancy's plume aſpiring, I unlock
The ſprings of ancient wiſdom; while I join
Thy name thrice honour'd! with th' immortal praiſe
Of nature; while to my compatriot youth
I point the high example of thy ſons,
And tune to Attic themes the Britiſh lyre.

Lycéum.] The ſchool of *Ariſtotle.*

Academus.] The ſchool of *Plato.*

Iliſſus.] One of the rivers on which *Athens* was ſituated. *Plato*, in ſome of his fineſt dialogues, lays the ſcene of the converſation with *Socrates* on its banks.

End of the FIRST BOOK.

THE

THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK the SECOND.

ARGUMENT of the SECOND BOOK.

THE separation of the works of imagination from philoſophy, the cauſe of their abuſe among the moderns; to verſe 41. *Proſpect of their re-union under the influence of public liberty; to* v. 61. *Enumeration of accidental pleaſures which increaſe the effect of objects delightful to the imagination. The pleaſures of ſenſe;* v. 73. *Particular circumſtances of the mind;* v. 84. *Diſcovery of truth;* v. 97. *Perception of contrivance and deſign;* v. 121. *Emotions of the paſſions;* v. 136. *All the natural paſſions partake of a pleaſing ſenſation, with the final cauſe of this conſtitution illuſtrated by an allegorical viſion, and exemplified in ſorrow, pity, terror and indignation; from* v. 155 *to the end.*

THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK the SECOND.

WHEN ſhall the laurel and the vocal ſtring
Reſume their honours? When ſhall we behold
The tuneful tongue, the Promethéan hand
Aſpire to ancient praiſe? Alas! how faint,
How ſlow the dawn of beauty and of truth
Breaks the reluctant ſhades of Gothic night
Which yet involve the nations! Long they groan'd
Beneath the furies of rapacious force;

Oft at the gloomy north, with iron-ſwarms
Tempeſtuous pouring from her frozen caves,
Blaſted th' Italian ſhore, and ſwept the works
Of liberty and wiſdom down the gulph
Of all-devouring night. As long immur'd
In noon-tide darkneſs by the glimmering lamp,
Each muſe and each fair ſcience pin'd away
The ſordid hours: while foul, barbarian hands
Their myſteries profan'd, unſtrung the lyre,
And chain'd the ſoaring pinion down to earth.
At laſt the Muſes roſe, and ſpurn'd their bonds,
And wildly warbling, ſcatter'd, as they flew,

At laſt the Muſes roſe, &c.] About the age of *Hugh Capet*, founder of the third race of *French* kings, the poets of *Provence* were in high reputation; a ſort of ſtroling bards or rhapſodiſts, who went about the courts of princes and noblemen, entertaining them at feſtivals with muſic and poetry. They attempted both the epic, ode, and ſatire, and abounded in a wild and fantaſtic vein of fable, partly allegorical, and partly founded on traditionary legends of the *Saracen* wars. Theſe were the rudiments of *Italian* poetry. But their taſte and compoſition muſt have been extremely barbarous, as we may judge by thoſe who followed the turn of their fable in much politer times; ſuch as *Bojardo*, *Bernardo Taſſo*, *Arioſto*, &c.

Their

Their blooming wreaths from fair Valcluſa's bow'rs
To Arno's myrtle border and the ſhore
Of ſoft Parthenope. But ſtill the rage
Of dire ambition and gigantic pow'r,
From public aims and from the buſy walk
Of civil commerce, drove the bolder train
Of penetrating ſcience to the cells;
Where ſtudious eaſe conſumes the ſilent hour
In ſhadowy ſearches and unfruitful care.
Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts
Of

Valcluſa.] The famous retreat of *Franciſco Petrarcha*, the father of *Italian* poetry, and his miſtreſs *Laura*, a lady of *Avignon*.

Arno.] The river which runs by *Florence*, the birth-place of *Dante* and *Boccacio*.

Parthenope.] Or *Naples*, the birth place of *Sannazaro*. The great *Torquato Taſſo* was born at *Servanto* in the kingdom of *Naples*

———*the rage*

Of dire ambition, &c.] This relates to the cruel wars among the republics of *Italy*, and the abominable politics of its little princes, about the fifteenth century. Theſe at laſt, in conjunction with the papal power, intirely extinguiſhed the ſpirit of liberty in that country, and eſtabliſhed that abuſe of the fine arts which has been ſince propagated over all *Europe*.

Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts, &c.] Nor were they only loſers by the ſeparation. For philoſophy itſelf,

Of mimic fancy and harmonious joy,
To prieſtly domination and the luſt
Of lawleſs courts, their amiable toil
For three inglorious ages have reſign'd,
In vain reluctant: and Torquato's tongue
Was tun'd for ſlaviſh pæans at the throne
Of tinſel pomp: and Raphael's magic hand

---

to uſe the words of a noble philoſopher, *being thus ſever'd from the ſprightly arts and ſciences, muſt conſequently grow droniſh, inſipid, pedantic, uſeleſs, and directly oppoſite to the real knowledge and practice of the world.* Inſomuch that *a gentleman*, ſays another excellent writer, *cannot eaſily bring himſelf to like ſo auſtere and ungainly a form: ſo greatly is it changed from what was once the delight of the fineſt gentlemen of antiquity, and their recreation after the hurry of public affairs!* From this condition it cannot be recovered but by uniting it once more with the works of imagination; and we have had the pleaſure of obſerving a very great progreſs made towards their union in *England* within theſe few years. It is hardly poſſibly to conceive them at a greater diſtance from each other than at the revolution, when *Locke* ſtood at the head of one party, and *Dryden* of the other. But the general ſpirit of liberty, which has ever ſince been growing, naturally invited our men of wit and genius to improve that influence which the arts of perſuaſion gave them with the people, by applying them to ſubjects of importance to ſociety. Thus poetry and eloquence became conſiderable; and philoſophy is now of courſe obliged to borrow of their embelliſhments, in order even to gain audience with the public.

Effus'd

Effus'd its fair creation to enchant
The fond adoring herd in Latian fanes
To bind belief; while on their proſtrate necks
The ſable tyrant plants his heel ſecure.
But now behold! the radiant æra dawns,
When freedom's ample fabric, fix'd at length
For endleſs years on Albion's happy ſhore
In full proportion, once more ſhall extend
To all the kindred pow'rs of ſocial bliſs
A common manſion, a parental roof.
There ſhall the Virtues, there ſhall Wiſdom's train
Their long-loſt friends rejoining, as of old,
Imbrace the ſmiling family of arts,
The Muſes and the Graces. Then no more
Shall vice, diſtracting their delicious gifts
To aims abhorr'd, with high diſtaſte and ſcorn
Turn from their charms the philoſophic eye,
The patriot-boſom; then no more the paths
Of public care or intellectual toil,
Alone by footſteps haughty and ſevere
In gloomy ſtate be trod: th' harmonious Muſe
And her perſuaſive ſiſters then ſhall plant

Their ſhelt'ring laurels o'er the bleak aſcent,
And ſcatter flow'rs along the rugged way.
Arm'd with the lyre, already have we dar'd
To pierce divine philoſophy's retreats,
And teach the Muſe her lore; already ſtrove
Their long-divided honours to unite,
While temp'ring this deep argument we ſang
Of truth and beauty. Now the ſame taſk
Impends; now urging our ambitious toil,
We haſten to recount the various ſprings
Of adventitious pleaſure, which adjoin
Their grateful influence to the prime effect
Of objects grand or beauteous, and inlarge
The complicated joy. The ſweets of ſenſe,
Do they not oft with ſweet acceſſion flow,
To raiſe harmonious fancy's native charm?
So while we taſte the fragrance of the roſe,
Glows not her bluſh the fairer? While we view
Amid the noontide walk a limped rill
Guſh thro' the trickling herbage, to the thirſt
Of ſummer yieldiug the delicious draught
Of cool refreſhment; o'er the moſſy brink

Shines

Shines not the ſurface clearer, and the waves
With ſweeter muſic murmur as they flow?

Nor this alone; the various lot of life
Oft from external circumſtance aſſumes
A moment's diſpoſition to rejoice
In thoſe delights which at a different hour
Would paſs unheeded. Fair the face of ſpring,
When rural ſongs and odours wake the morn,
To every eye; but how much more to his
Round whom the bed of ſickneſs long diffus'd
Its melancholy gloom! how doubly fair,
When firſt with freſh-born vigour *he* inhales
The balmy breeze, and feels the bleſſed ſun
Warm at his boſom, from the ſprings of life
Chaſing oppreſſive damps and languid pain!

Or ſhall I mention, where cœleſtial truth
Her awful light diſcloſes, to beſtow
A more majeſtic pomp on beauty's frame?
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of truth
More welcome touch his underſtanding's eye,

Than

Than all the blandiſhments of ſound his ear,
Than all of taſte his tongue. Nor ever yet
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctur'd hues
To me have ſhone ſo pleaſing, as when firſt
The hand of ſcience pointed out the path
In which the ſun-beams gleaming from the weſt
Fall on the watry cloud, whoſe darkſome veil
Involves the orient; and that trickling ſhow'r
Piercing thro' ev'ry cryſtalline convex
Of cluſtering dew-drops to their flight oppos'd,
Recoil at length where concave all behind
Th' internal ſurface of each glaſſy orb
Repells their forward paſſage into air;
That thence direct they ſeek the radiant goal
From with their courſe began; and, as they ſtrike
In diff'rent lines the gazer's obvious eye,
Aſſume a diff'rent luſtre, thro' the brede
Of colours changing from the ſplendid roſe
To the pale violet's dejected hue.

Or ſhall we touch that kind acceſs of joy,
That ſprings to each fair object, while we trace

Thro'

Thro' all its fabric, wiſdom's artful aim
Diſpoſing every part, and gaining ſtill
By means proportion'd her benignant end?
Speak, ye, the pure delight, whoſe favour'd ſteps
The lamp of ſcience thro' the jealous maze
Of nature guides, when haply you reveal
Her ſecret honours: whether in the ſky,
The beauteous laws of light, the central pow'rs
That wheel their planets round their various year;
Whether in wonders of the rowling deep,
Or the rich fruits of all-ſuſtaining earth,
Or fine-adjuſted ſprings of life and ſenſe,
Ye ſcan the counſels of their author's hand.

What, when to raiſe the meditated ſcene,
The flame of paſſion, thro' the ſtruggling ſoul
Deep-kindled, ſhows acroſs that ſudden blaze
The object of its rapture, vaſt of ſize,
With fiercer colours and a night of ſhade?
What? like a ſtorm from their capacious bed
The ſounding ſeas o'erwhelming, when the might
Of theſe eruptions, working from the depth

Of

Of man's ſtrong apprehenſion, ſhakes his frame
Ev'n to the baſe; from every naked ſenſe
Of pain or pleaſure diſſipating all
Opinion's feeble cov'rings, and the veil
Spun from the cobweb-faſhion of the times
To hide the feeling heart? Then nature ſpeaks
Her genuine language, and the words of men,
Big with the very motion of their ſouls,
Declare with what accumulated force,
Th' impetuous nerve of paſſion urges on
The native weight and energy of things.

Yet more; her honours where nor beauty claims,
Nor ſhews of good the thirſty ſenſe allure,
From paſſion's pow'r alone our nature holds
Eſſential

From paſſion's pow'r alone, &c.] This very myſterious kind of pleaſure which is often found in the exerciſe of paſſions generally counted painful, has been taken notice of by ſeveral authors. *Lucretius* reſolves it into ſelf-love.

Suave mari magno, &c. lib. II. 1.

As if a man was never pleas'd in being moved at the diſtreſs of a tragedy, without a cool reflection that tho' theſe fictitious perſonages

Eſſential pleaſure. Paſſion's fierce illapſe
Rouzes the mind's whole fabric; with ſupplies
Of daily impulſe keeps th' elaſtic pow'rs
Intenſely poiz'd, and poliſhes anew
By that colliſion all the fine machine:
Elſe ruſt would riſe, and foulneſs, by degrees
Incumb'ring, choak at laſt what heav'n deſign'd
For ceaſleſs motion and a round of toil.
—But ſay, does every paſſion thus to man
Adminiſter delight? That name indeed
Becomes the roſy breath of love; becomes
The radiant ſmiles of joy, th' applauding hand
Of admiration: but the bitter ſhow'r
That ſorrow ſheds upon a brother's grave,

ſonages were ſo unhappy, yet he himſelf was perfectly at eaſe and in ſafety. The ingenious author of the *reflexions critiques ſur la poeſie & la peinture*, accounts for it by the general delight which the mind takes in its own activity, and the abhorrence it feels of an indolent and inattentive ſtate: And this, join'd with that moral approbation of its own temper, which attends theſe emotions when natural and juſt, is certainly the true foundation of the pleaſure, which as it is the origin and baſis of tragedy and epic, deſerved a very particular conſideration in this poem.

But

But the dumb palſy of nocturnal fear,
Or thoſe conſuming fires that gnaw the heart
Of panting indignation, find we there
To move delight?—Then liſten, while my tongue
Th' unalter'd will of heav'n with faithful awe
Reveals; what old Harmodius wont to teach
My early age; Harmodius, who hath weigh'd
Within his learned mind whate'er the ſchools
Of wiſdom, or thy lonely-whiſp'ring voice,
Of faithful nature! dictate of the laws
Which govern and ſupport this mighty frame
Of univerſal being. Oft the hours
From morn to eve have ſtol'n unmark'd away,
While mute attention hung upon his lips,
As thus the ſage his awful tale began.

'Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,
When ſpotleſs youth to ſolitude reſigns
To ſweet philoſophy the ſtudious day,
What time pale autumn ſhades the ſilent eve,
Muſing I rov'd. Of good and evil much,
And much of mortal man my thought revolv'd;

When

When ſtarting full on fancy's guſhing eye
The mournful image of Parthenia's fate,
That hour, O long belov'd and long deplor'd!
When blooming youth, nor gentleſt wiſdom's arts,
Nor Hymen's honours gather'd for thy brow,
Nor all thy lover's, all thy father's tears
Avail'd to ſnatch thee from the cruel grave;
Thy agonizing looks, thy laſt farewel
Struck to the inmoſt feeling of my ſoul
As with the hand of death. At once the ſhade
More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds
With hoarſer murm'ring ſhook the branches. Dark
As midnight ſtorms, the ſcene of human things
Appear'd before me; deſarts, burning ſands,
Where the parch'd adder dies; the frozen ſouth,
And deſolation blaſting all the weſt
With rapine and with murder: tyrant pow'r
Here ſits enthron'd with blood; the baleful charms
Of ſuperſtition there infect the ſkies,
And turn the ſun to horror. Gracious heav'n!
What is the life of man? Or cannot theſe,
Not theſe portents thy awful will ſuffice?

That

That propagated thus beyond their ſcope,
They riſe to act their cruelties anew
In my afflicted boſom, thus decreed
The univerſal ſenſitive of pain,
The wretched heir of evils not its own!

Thus I impatient; when at once effus'd,
A flaſhing torrent of cœleſtial day
Burſt thro' the ſhadowy void. With ſlow deſcent
A purple cloud came floating thro' the ſky,
And pois'd at length within the circling trees,
Hung obvious to my view; till opening wide
Its lucid orb, a more than human form
Emerging lean'd majeſtic o'er my head,
And inſtant thunder ſhook the conſcious grove.
Then melted into air the liquid cloud,
And all the ſhining viſion ſtood reveal'd.
A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,
And o'er his ſhoulder, mantling to his knee,
Flow'd the tranſparent robe, around his waiſt
Collected with a radiant zone of gold
Æthereal: there in myſtic ſigns ingrav'd,

I read

I read his office high and ſacred name,
Genius of human kind. Appall'd I gaz'd
The godlike preſence; for athwart his brow
Diſpleaſure temper'd with a mild concern,
Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words
Like diſtant thunders broke the murm'ring air.

Vain are thy thoughts, O child of mortal birth,
And impotent thy tongue. Is thy ſhort ſpan
Capacious of this univerſal frame?
Thy wiſdom all-ſufficient? Thou, alas!
Doſt thou aſpire to judge between the lord
Of nature and his works? to lift thy voice
Againſt the ſov'reign order he decreed
All good and lovely? to blaſpheme the bands
Of tenderneſs innate and ſocial love,
Holieſt of things! by which the general orb
Of being, as by adamantine links,
Was drawn to perfect union and ſuſtain'd
From everlaſting? Haſt thou felt the pangs
Of ſoft'ning ſorrow, of indignant zeal

So grievous to the ſoul, as thence to wiſh
The ties of nature broken from thy frame;
That ſo thy ſelfiſh, unrelenting heart
Might ceaſe to mourn its lot, no longer then
The wretched heir of evils not its own?
O fair benevolence of gen'rous minds!
O man by nature form'd for all mankind!

He ſpoke; abaſh'd and ſilent I remain'd,
As conſcious of my tongue's offence, and aw'd
Before his preſence, tho' my ſecret ſoul
Diſdain'd the imputation. On the ground
I fix'd my eyes; till from his airy couch
He ſtoop'd ſublime, and touching with his hand
My dazzled forehead, Raiſe thy ſight, he cry'd,
And let thy ſenſe convince thy erring tongue.

I look'd, and lo! the former ſcene was chang'd;
For verdant alleys and ſurrounding trees,
A ſolitary proſpect, wide and wild,
Ruſh'd on my ſenſes. 'Twas an horrid pile

Of

Of hills with many a ſhaggy foreſt mix'd,
With many a ſable cliff and glitt'ring ſtream.
Aloft recumbent o'er the hanging ridge,
The brown woods wav'd; while ever-trickling ſprings
Waſh'd from the naked roots of oak and pine
The crumbling ſoil; and ſtill at every fall
Down the ſteep windings of the channel'd rock,
Remurm'ring ruſh'd the congregated floods
With hoarſer inundation; till at laſt
They reach'd a graſſy plain, which from the ſkirts
Of that high deſart ſpread her verdant lap,
And drank the guſhing moiſture, where confin'd
In one ſmooth current, o'er the lilied vale
Clearer than glaſs it flow'd. Autumnal ſpoils
Luxuriant ſpreading to the rays of morn,
Bluſh'd o'er the cliffs, whoſe half-incircling mound
As in a ſylvan theatre inclos'd
That flow'ry level. On the river's brink
I ſpy'd a fair pavilion, which diffus'd
Its floating umbrage 'mid the ſilver ſhade
Of oſiers. Now the weſtern ſun reveal'd

Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,
And pour'd acroſs the ſhadow of the hills,
On rocks and floods, a yellow ſtream of light
That chear'd the ſolemn ſcene. My liſt'ning pow'rs
Were aw'd, and every thought in ſilence hung,
And wond'ring expectation. Then the voice
Of that cœleſtial pow'r, the myſtic ſhow
Declaring, thus my deep attention call'd.

Inhabitant of earth, to whom is giv'n
The gracious ways of providence to learn,
Receive

Inhabitant of earth, &c.] The account of the œconomy of providence here introduced, as the moſt proper to calm and ſatisfy the mind when under the compunction of private evils, ſeems to have come originally from the *Pythagorean* ſchool: but of the ancient philoſophers, *Plato* has moſt largely inſiſted upon it, has eſtabliſhed it with all the ſtrength of his capacious underſtanding, and ennobled it with all the magnificence of his divine imagination. He has one paſſage ſo full and clear on the head, that I am perſuaded the reader will be pleaſed to ſee it here, tho' ſomewhat long. Addreſſing himſelf to ſuch as are not ſatisfied concerning divine providence, *The being who preſides*

Receive my ſayings with a ſtedfaſt ear——
Know then, the ſov'reign ſpirit of the world,
Tho' ſelf-collected from eternal time,
Within his own deep eſſence he beheld
The bounds of true felicity compleat;

Yet

---

preſides over the whole, ſays he, *has diſpoſed and complicated all things for the happineſs and virtue of the whole, every part of which, according to the extent of its influence, does and ſuffers what is fit and proper. One of theſe parts is yours, O unhappy man, which tho' in itſelf moſt inconſiderable and minute, yet being connected with the univerſe, ever ſeeks to co-operate with that ſupreme order. You in the mean time are ignorant of the very end for which all particular natures are brought into exiſtence, that the all-comprehending nature of the whole may be perfect and happy; exiſting, as it does, not for your ſake, but the cauſe and reaſon of your exiſtence, which, as in the ſymmetry of every artificial work, muſt of neceſſity concur with the general deſign of the artiſt, and be ſubſervient to the whole of which it is a part. Your complaint therefore is ignorant and groundleſs; ſince according to the various energy of creation, and the common laws of nature, there is a conſtant proviſion of that which is beſt at the ſame time for you and for the whole.——For the governing intelligence clearly beholding all the actions of animated and ſelf-moving creatures, and that mixture of good and evil which diverſifies them, conſidered firſt of all by what diſpoſition of things and by what ſituation of each individual in the general ſyſtem,*

Yet by immenſe benignity inclin'd
To ſpread around him that primæval joy
Which fill'd himſelf, he rais'd his plaſtic arm,
And ſounded thro' the hollow depth of ſpace
The ſtrong, creative mandate. Strait aroſe
Theſe heav'nly orbs, the glad abodes of life

---

vice might be depreſſed and ſubdued, and virtue made ſecure of victory and happineſs with the greateſt facility and in the higheſt degree poſſible: In this manner he order'd thro' the entire circle of being, the internal conſtitution of every mind, where ſhould be its ſtation in the univerſal fabric, and thro' what variety of circumſtances it ſhould proceed in the whole tenour of its exiſtence. He goes on in his ſublime manner to aſſert a future ſtate of retribution, *as well for thoſe who, by the exerciſe of good diſpoſitions being harmonized and aſſimilated into the divine virtue, are conſequently removed to a place of unblemiſh'd ſanctity and happineſs; as of thoſe who by the moſt flagitious arts have riſen from contemptible beginnings to the greateſt affluence and power, and whom you therefore look upon as unanſwerable inſtances of negligence in the gods, becauſe you are ignorant of the purpoſes to which they are ſubſervient, and in what manner they contribute to that ſupreme intention of good to the whole.* Plato de Leg. x. 16.

This theory has been delivered of late, eſpecially abroad, in a manner which ſubverts the freedom of human actions; whereas *Plato* appears very careful to preſerve it, and has been in that reſpect imitated by the beſt of his followers.

Effuſive

Effuſive kindled by his breath divine
Thro' endleſs forms of being. Each inhal'd
From him each portion of the vital flame,
In meaſure ſuch, that from the wide complex
Of coexiſtent orders, *one* might riſe,
One order, all-involving and intire.
He too beholding in the ſacred light
Of his eſſential reaſon, all the ſhapes
Of ſwift contingence, all ſucceſſive ties
Of action propagated thro' the ſum
Of poſſible exiſtence, he at once,
Down the long ſeries of eventful time,
So fix'd the dates of being, ſo diſpos'd,
To every living ſoul of every kind
The field of motion and the hour of reſt,
That all conſpir'd to his ſupreme deſign,
To univerſal good: with full accord
Anſwering the mighty model he had chos'n,

——*one might riſe,*

One order, &c.] See the meditations of *Antoninus*, and the characteriſticks, paſſim.

The beſt and faireſt of unnumber'd worlds
That lay from everlaſting in the ſtore
Of his divine conceptions. Nor content,
By *one* exertion of creative pow'r
His goodneſs to reveal; thro' every age,
Thro' every moment up the tract of time
His parent-hand with ever-new increaſe
Of happineſs and virtue has adorn'd
The vaſt harmonious frame: his parent-hand,
From the mute ſhell-fiſh gaſping on the ſhore,
To men, to angels, to cœleſtial minds

The beſt and faireſt, &c.] This opinion is ſo old, that *Timæus Locrus* calls the ſupreme being δαμιυργὸς τῷ βελτιονος, *the artificer of that which is beſt*; and repreſents him as reſolving in the beginning to produce the moſt excellent work, and as copying the world moſt exactly from his own intelligible and eſſential idea; *ſo that it yet remains, as it was at firſt, perfect in beauty, and will never ſtand in need of any correction or improvement*. There can be no room for a caution here, to underſtand theſe expreſſions, not of any particular circumſtances of human life ſeparately conſider'd, but of the ſum or univerſal ſyſtem of life and being. See alſo the viſion at the end of the *Theodicée* of *Leibnitz*.

For

For ever leads the generations on
To higher ſcenes of being; while ſupply'd
From day to day with his enliv'ning breath,
Inferior orders in ſucceſſion riſe
To fill the void below. As flame aſcends,
As bodies to their proper center move,
As the pois'd ocean to th' attracting moon
Obedient ſwells, and every headlong ſtream
Devolves its winding waters to the main;
So all things which have life aſpire to God,
The ſun of being, boundleſs, unimpair'd,
Center of ſouls! Nor does the faithful voice
Of nature ceaſe to prompt their eager ſteps
Aright; nor is the care of heav'n witheld
From granting to the taſk proportion'd aid;
That in their ſtations all may perſevere
To climb th' aſcent of being, and approach
For ever nearer to the life divine.

As flame aſcends, &c.] This opinion, tho' not held by *Plato* nor any of the ancients, is yet a very natural conſequence of his principles. But the diſquiſition is too complex and extenſive to be entered upon here.

That

That rocky pile thou ſee'ſt, that verdant lawn
Freſh-water'd from the mountains. Let the ſcene
Paint in thy fancy the primæval ſeat
Of man, and where the will ſupreme ordain'd
His manſion, that pavilion far-diffus'd
Along the ſhady brink; in this receſs
To wear th' appointed ſeaſon of his youth,
Till riper hours ſhould open to his toil
The high communion of ſuperior minds,
Of conſecrated heroes and of gods.
Nor did the ſire omnipotent forget
His tender bloom to cheriſh; nor witheld
Cœleſtial footſteps from his green abode.
Oft from the radiant honours of his throne,
He ſent whom moſt he lov'd, the ſov'reign fair,
The effluence of his glory, whom he plac'd
Before his eyes for ever to behold;
The goddeſs from whoſe inſpiration flows
The toil of patriots, the delight of friends;
Without whoſe work divine, in heav'n or earth,
Nought lovely, nought propitious comes to paſs,

Nor

Nor hope, nor praiſe, nor honour. Her the ſire
Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind,
The folded pow'rs to open, to direct
The growth luxuriant of his young deſires,
And from the laws of this majeſtic world
To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph
Her daily care attended, by her ſide
With conſtant ſteps her gay companion ſtay'd,
The fair Euphroſyné, the gentle queen
Of ſmiles, and graceful gladneſs, and delights
That chear alike the hearts of mortal men
And pow'rs immortal. See the ſhining pair!
Behold, where from his dwelling now diſclos'd
They quit their youthful charge and ſeek the ſkies.

I look'd, and on the flow'ry turf there ſtood
Between two radiant forms a ſmiling youth
Whoſe tender cheeks diſplay'd the vernal flow'r
Of beauty; ſweeteſt innocence illum'd
His baſhful eyes, and on his poliſh'd brow
Sate young ſimplicity. With fond regard

He

He view'd th' aſſociates, as their ſteps they mov'd;
The younger chief his ardent eyes detain'd,
With mild regret invoking her return.
Bright as the ſtar of evening ſhe appear'd
Amid the duſky ſcene. Eternal youth
O'er all her form its glowing honours breath'd;
And ſmiles eternal, from her candid eyes
Flow'd like the dewy luſtre of the morn
Effuſive trembling on the placid waves.
The ſpring of heav'n had ſhed its bluſhing ſpoils
To bind her ſable treſſes: full diffus'd
Her yellow mantle floated in the breeze;
And in her hand ſhe wav'd a living branch
Rich with immortal fruits, of pow'r to calm
The wrathful heart, and from the bright'ning eyes
To chaſe the cloud of ſadneſs. More ſublime
The heav'nly part'ner mov'd. The prime of age
Compos'd her ſteps. The preſence of a god,
High on the circle of her brow inthron'd,
From each majeſtic motion darted awe,
Devoted awe! till, cheriſh'd by her looks

Bene-

Benevolent and meek, confiding love
To filial rapture ſoften'd all the ſoul.
Free in her graceful hand ſhe pois'd the ſword
Of chaſte dominion. An heroic crown
Diſplay'd the old ſimplicity of pomp
Around her honour'd head. A matron's robe,
White as the ſunſhine ſtreams thro' vernal clouds,
Her ſtately form inveſted. Hand in hand
Th' immortal pair forſook th' enamell'd green,
Aſcending ſlowly. Rays of limpid light
Gleam'd round their path; cœleſtial ſounds were heard,
And thro' the fragrant air æthereal dews
Diſtill'd around them; till at once the clouds
Diſparting wide in midway ſky, withdrew
Their airy veil, and left a bright expanſe
Of empyréan flame, where ſpent and drown'd,
Afflicted viſion plung'd in vain to ſcan
What object it involv'd. My feeble eyes
Indur'd not. Bending down to earth I ſtood,
With dumb attention. Soon a female voice,
As watry murmurs ſweet, or warbling ſhades,
With ſacred invocation thus began.

Father

Father of gods and mortals! whoſe right arm
With reins eternal guides the moving heav'ns,
Bend thy propitious ear. Behold well-pleas'd
I ſeek to finiſh thy divine decree.
With frequent ſteps I viſit yonder ſeat
Of man, thy offspring; from the tender ſeeds
Of juſtice and of wiſdom, to evolve
The latent honours of his generous frame;
Till thy conducting hand ſhall raiſe his lot
From earth's dim ſcene to theſe æthereal walks,
The temple of thy glory. But not me,
Not my directing voice he oft requires,
Or hears delighted: this inchanting maid,
Th' aſſociate thou haſt giv'n me, her alone
He loves, O Father! abſent, her he craves;
And but for her glad preſence ever join'd,
Rejoices not in mine: that all my hopes
This thy benignant purpoſe to fulfil,
I deem uncertain; and my daily cares
Unfruitful all and vain, unleſs by thee
Still farther aided in the work divine.

She

She ceas'd; a voice more awful thus reply'd.
O thou! in whom for ever I delight,
Fairer than all th' inhabitants of heav'n,
Beſt image of thy author! far from thee
Be diſappointment, or diſtaſte, or blame;
Who ſoon or late ſhalt every work fulfil,
And no reſiſtance find. If man refuſe
To hearken to thy dictates; or allur'd
By meaner joys, to any other pow'r
Transfer the honours due to thee alone;
That joy which he purſues he ne'er ſhall taſte,
That pow'r in whom delighteth ne'er behold.
Go then once more, and happy be thy toil;
Go then! but let not this thy ſmiling friend
Partake thy footſteps. In her ſtead, behold!
With thee the ſon of Nemeſis I ſend;
The fiend abhorr'd! whoſe vengeance takes account
Of ſacred order's violated laws.
See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,
Fierce to exhauſt the tempeſt of his wrath
On yon devoted head. But thou, my child,
Controul his cruel frenzy, and protect

Thy

Thy tender charge; that when deſpair ſhall graſp
His agonizing boſom, he may learn,
Then he may learn to love the gracious hand
Alone ſufficient in the hour of ill,
To ſave his feeble ſpirit; then confeſs
Thy genuine honours, O excelling fair!
When all the plagues that wait the deadly will
Of this avenging dæmon, all the ſtorms
Of night infernal, ſerve but to diſplay
The energy of thy ſuperior charms
With mildeſt awe triumphant o'er his rage,
And ſhining clearer in the horrid gloom.

Here ceas'd that awful voice, and ſoon I felt
The cloudy curtain of refreſhing eve
Was clos'd once more, from that immortal fire
Shelt'ring my eye-lids. Looking up, I view'd
A vaſt gigantic ſpectre ſtriding on
Thro' murm'ring thunders and a waſte of clouds,
With dreadful action. Black as night his brow
Relentleſs frowns involv'd. His ſavage limbs
With ſharp impatience violent he writh'd,

As

As thro' convulſive anguiſh; and his hand
Arm'd with a ſcorpion-laſh, full oft he rais'd
In madneſs to his boſom; while his eyes
Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud he ſhook
The void with horror. Silent by his ſide
The virgin came. No diſcompoſure ſtirr'd
Her features. From the glooms which hung around,
No ſtain of darkneſs mingled with the beam
Of her divine effulgence. Now they ſtoop
Upon the river-bank; and now to hail
His wonted gueſts, with eager ſteps advanc'd
The unſuſpecting inmate of the ſhade.

As when a famiſh'd wolf, that all night long
Had rang'd the Alpine ſnows, by chance at morn
Sees from a cliff incumbent o'er the ſmoke
Of ſome lone village, a neglected kid
That ſtrays along the wild for herb or ſpring;
Down from the winding ridge he ſweeps amain,
And thinks he tears him: ſo with tenfold rage,
The monſter ſprung remorſeleſs on his prey.
Amaz'd the ſtripling ſtood: with panting breaſt

Feebly he pour'd the lamentable wail
Of helpleſs conſternation, ſtruck at once,
And rooted to the ground. The queen beheld
His terror, and with looks of tend'reſt care
Advanc'd to ſave him. Soon the tyrant felt
Her awful pow'r. His keen, tempeſtuous arm
Hung nerveleſs, nor deſcended where his rage
Had aim'd the deadly blow: then dumb retir'd
With ſullen rancour. Lo! the ſov'reign maid
Folds with a mother's arms the fainting boy,
Till life rekindles in his roſy cheek;
Then graſps his hand, and chears him with her tongue.

O wake thee, rouze thy ſpirit! Shall the ſpite
Of yon tormentor thus apall thy heart,
While I, thy friend and guardian, am at hand
To reſcue and to heal? O let thy ſoul
Remember, what the will of heav'n ordains
Is ever good for all; and if for all,
Then good for thee. Nor only by the warmth
And ſoothing ſunſhine of delightful things,
Do minds grow up and flouriſh. Oft miſled

By

By that bland light, the young unpractis'd views
Of reaſon wander thro' a fatal road,
Far from their native aim: as if to lye
Inglorious in the fragrant ſhade, and wait
The ſoft acceſs of ever-cirling joys,
Were all the end of being. Aſk thyſelf,
This pleaſing error did it never lull
Thy wiſhes? Has thy conſtant heart refus'd
The ſilken fetters of delicious eaſe?
Or when divine Euphroſyné appear'd
Within this dwelling, did not thy deſires
Hang far below that meaſure of thy fate,
Which I reveal'd before thee? and thy eyes,
Impatient of my counſels, turn away
To drink the ſoft effuſion of her ſmiles?
Know then, for this the everlaſting fire
Deprives thee of her preſence, and inſtead,
O wiſe and ſtill benevolent! ordains
This horrid viſage hither to purſue
My ſteps; that ſo thy nature may diſcern
Its real good, and what alone can ſave
Thy feeble ſpirit in this hour of ill

From folly and deſpair. O yet belov'd!
Let not this headlong terror quite o'erwhelm
Thy ſcatter'd pow'rs; nor fatal deem the rage
Of this tormentor, nor his proud aſſault,
While I am here to vindicate thy toil,
Above the generous queſtion of thy arm.
Brave by thy fears and in thy weakneſs ſtrong,
This hour he triumphs; but confront his might,
And dare him to the combat, then with eaſe
Diſarm'd and quell'd, his fierceneſs he reſigns
To bondage and to ſcorn: while thus inur'd
By watchful danger, by unceaſing toil,
Th' immortal mind, ſuperior to his fate,
Amid the outrage of external things,
Firm as the ſolid baſe of this great world,
Reſts on his own foundations. Blow ye winds!
Ye waves! ye thunders! rowl your tempeſt on;
Shake, ye old pillars of the marble ſky!
Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire
Be looſen'd from their ſeats; yet ſtill ſerene,
Th' unconquer'd mind looks down upon the wreck,
And ever ſtronger as the ſtorms advance,

Firm

Firm thro' the cloſing ruin holds his way,
Where nature calls him to the deſtin'd goal.

So ſpake the goddeſs; while thro' all her frame
Cœleſtial raptures flow'd, in every word,
In every motion kindling warmth divine
To ſeize who liſten'd. Vehement and ſwift
As light'ning flies the aromatic ſhade
In Æthiopian fields, the ſtripling felt
Her inſpiration catch his fervid ſoul,
And ſtarting from his languor thus exclaim'd.

Then let the trial come! and witneſs thou,
If terror be upon me; if I ſhrink
To meet the ſtorm, or faulter in my ſtrength
When hardeſt it beſets me. Do not think
That I am fearful and infirm of ſoul,
As late thy eyes beheld: for thou haſt chang'd
My nature; thy commanding voice has wak'd
My languid pow'rs to bear me boldly on,
Where'er the will divine my path ordains
Thro' toil or peril: only do not thou

Forſake me; O be thou for ever near,
That I may liſten to thy ſacred voice,
And guide by thy decrees my conſtant feet.
But ſay, for ever are my eyes bereft?
Say, ſhall the fair Euphroſyné not once
Appear again to chatm me? Thou, in heav'n!
O thou eternal arbiter of things!
Be thy great bidding done: for who am I
To queſtion thy appointment? Let the frowns
Of this avenger every morn o'ercaſt
The chearful dawn, and every evening damp
With double night my dwelling; I will learn
To hail them both, and unrepining bear
His hateful preſence: but permit my tongue
One glad requeſt, and if my deeds may find
Thy awful eye propitious, O reſtore
The roſy-featur'd maid; again to chear
This lonely ſeat, and bleſs me with her ſmiles.

He ſpoke; when inſtant thro' the ſable glooms
With which that furious preſence had involv'd
The ambient air, a flood of radiance came

Swift as the light'ning flaſh; the melting clouds
Flew diverſe, and amid the blue ſerene
Euphroſyné appear'd. With ſprightly ſtep
The nymph alighted on th' irriguous lawn,
And to her wond'ring audience thus began.

Lo! I am here to anſwer to your vows,
And be the meeting fortunate! I come
With joyful tidings; we ſhall part no more—
Hark! how the gentle Echo from her cell
Talks thro' the cliffs, and murm'ring o'er the ſtream
Repeats the accents; we ſhall part no more.
O my delightful friends! well-pleas'd on high
The father has beheld you, while the might
Of that ſtern foe with bitter trial prov'd
Your equal doings; then for ever ſpake
The high decree: that thou, cœleſtial maid!
Howe'er that grieſly phantom on thy ſteps
May ſometimes dare intrude, yet never more
Shalt thou deſcending to th' abode of man,
Alone endure the rancour of his arm,
Or leave thy lov'd Euphroſyné behind.

She ended; and the whole romantic ſcene
Immediate vaniſh'd: rocks, and woods, and rills,
The mantling tent, and each myſterious form
Flew like the pictures of a morning dream,
When ſun-ſhine fills the bed. A while I ſtood
Perplex'd and giddy; till the radiant pow'r
Who bade the viſionary landſcape riſe,
As up to him I turn'd, with gentleſt looks
Preventing my inquiry, thus began.

There let thy ſoul acknowledge its complaint
How blind, how impious! There behold the ways
Of heav'n's eternal deſtiny to man,
For ever juſt, benevolent and wiſe:
That VIRTUE's awful ſteps, howe'er purſued
By vexing fortune and intruſive PAIN,
Should never be divided from her chaſt,
Her fair attendant, PLEASURE. Need I urge
Thy tardy thought through all the various round
Of this exiſtence, that thy ſoft'ning ſoul
At length may learn what energy the hand

Of

Of virtue mingles in the bitter tide
Of paſſion ſwelling with diſtreſs and pain,
To mitigate the ſharp with gracious drops
Of cordial pleaſure? Aſk the faithful youth,
While the cold urn of her whom long he lov'd
So often fills his arms; ſo often draws
His lonely footſteps at the ſilent hour,
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
O! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds
Should ne'er ſeduce his boſom to forego
That ſacred hour, when ſtealing from the noiſe
Of care and envy, ſweet remembrance ſooths
With virtue's kindeſt looks his aking breaſt,
And turns his tears to rapture—Aſk the croud
Which flies impatient from the village-walk
To climb the neighb'ring cliffs, when far below
The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coaſt
Some helpleſs bark; while ſacred pity melts
The gen'ral eye, or terror's icy hand
Smites their diſtorted limbs and horrent hair;
While every mother cloſer to her breaſt
Catches her child, and pointing where the waves

Foam

Foam thro' the ſhatter'd veſſel, ſhrieks aloud
As one poor wretch that ſpreads his piteous arms
For ſuccour, ſwallow'd by the roaring ſurge,
As now another, daſh'd againſt the rock,
Drops lifeleſs down: O deemeſt thou indeed
No kind endearment here by nature giv'n
To mutual terror and compaſſion's tears?
No ſweetly-melting ſoftneſs which attracts,
O'er all that edge of pain, the ſocial pow'rs
To this their proper action and their end?
—Aſk thy own heart; when at the midnight hour,
Slow thro' that ſtudious gloom thy pauſing eye
Led by the glimm'ring taper moves around
The ſacred volumes of the dead, the ſongs
Of Græcian bards, and records writ by fame
For Græcian heroes, where the preſent pow'r
Of heav'n and earth ſurveys th' immortal page,
E'en as a father bleſſing, while he reads
The praiſes of his ſon. If then thy ſoul,
Spurning the yoke of theſe inglorious days,
Mix in their deeds and kindle with their flame;
Say, when the proſpect blackens on thy view,

When

When rooted from the baſe, heroic ſtates
Mourn in the duſt and tremble at the frown
Of curſt ambition; when the pious band
Of youths that fought for freedom and their ſires
Lie ſide by ſide in gore; when ruffian-pride
Uſurps the throne of juſtice, turns the pomp
Of public pow'r, the majeſty of rule,
The ſword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
To ſlaviſh empty pageants, to adorn
A tyrant's walk, and glitter in the eyes
Of ſuch as bow the knee; when honour'd urns
Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful buſt
And ſtoried arch, to glut the coward-rage
Of regal envy, ſtrew the public way
With hallow'd ruins; when the muſe's haunt,
The marble porch where wiſdom wont to talk
With Socrates or Tully, hears no more,
Save the hoarſe jargon of contentious monks,
Or female ſuperſtition's midnight pray'r;
When ruthleſs rapine from the hand of time
Tears the deſtroying ſcythe, with ſurer blow
To ſweep the works of glory from their baſe;

Till

Till deſolation o'er the graſs-grown ſtreet
Expands his raven-wings, and up the wall,
Where ſenates once the pride of monarchs doom'd,
Hiſſes the gliding ſnake thro' hoary weeds
That claſp the mould'ring column; thus defac'd,
Thus widely mournful when the proſpect thrills
Thy beating boſom, when the patriot's tear
Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
To fire the impious wreath on Philip's brow,
Or daſh Octavius from the trophied car;
Say, does thy ſecret ſoul repine to taſte
The big diſtreſs? Or would'ſt thou then exchange
Thoſe heart-ennobling ſorrows for the lot
Of him who ſits amid the gaudy herd
Of mute barbarians bending to his nod,
And bears aloft his gold-inveſted front,
And ſays within himſelf, " I am a king,
" And wherefore ſhould the clam'rous voice of woe

Philip.] The *Macedonian.*

" Intrude

" Intrude upon mine ear?—The baleful dregs
Of theſe late ages, this inglorious draught
Of ſervitude and folly, have not yet,
Bleſt be th' eternal ruler of the world!
Defil'd to ſuch a depth of ſordid ſhame
The native honours of the human ſoul,
Nor ſo effac'd the image of its ſire.

End of the SECOND BOOK.

THE

THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK the THIRD.

ARGUMENT of the THIRD BOOK.

PLEASURE in obſerving the tempers and manners of men, even where vicious or abſurd; v. 1, *to* 14. *The origin of vice, from falſe repreſentations of the fancy, producing falſe opinions concerning good and evil*; v. 14, *to* 62. *Inquiry into ridicule*; v. 73. *The general ſources of ridicule in the minds and characters of men, enumerated*; v. 14, *to* 240. *Final cauſe of the ſenſe of ridicule*; v. 263. *The reſemblance of certain aſpects of inanimate things to the ſenſations and properties of the mind*; v. 282, *to* 311. *The operations of the mind in the production of the works of imagination, deſcribed*; v. 358, *to* 414. *The ſecondary pleaſure from imitation*; *to* v. 436. *The benevolent order of the world illuſtrated in the arbitrary connection of theſe pleaſures with the objects which excite them*; v. 458, *to* 514. *The nature and conduct of taſte*; v. 515, *to* 567. *Concluding with an account of the natural and moral advantages reſulting from a ſenſible and well-form'd imagination.*

THE

THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK the THIRD.

WHAT wonder therefore, ſince th'indearing ties
Of paſſion link the univerſal kind
Of man ſo cloſe, what wonder if to ſearch
This common nature thro' the various change
Of ſex, and age, and fortune, and the frame
Of each peculiar, draw the buſy mind
With unreſiſted charms? The ſpacious weſt,
And all the teeming regions of the ſouth

Hold not a quarry, to the curious flight
Of knowledge, half ſo tempting or ſo fair,
As man to man. Nor only where the ſmiles
Of love invite; nor only where th' applauſe
Of cordial honour turns th' attentive eye
On virtue's graceful deeds. For ſince the courſe
Of things external acts in different ways
On human apprehenſions, as the hand
Of nature temper'd to a different frame
Peculiar minds; ſo haply where the pow'rs
Of fancy neither leſſen nor enlarge

The

——*where the pow'rs*

Of fancy, &c.] The influence of the imagination on the conduct of life, is one of the moſt important points in moral philoſophy. It were eaſy by an induction of facts to prove that the imagination directs almoſt all the paſſions, and mixes with almoſt every circumſtance of action or pleaſure. Let any man, even of the coldeſt head and ſobereſt induſtry, analyſe the idea of certain degrees of decency, beauty and order, variouſly combined into one ſyſtem, the idol which he ſeeks to enjoy by labour, hazard, and ſelf-denial. It is on this account of the laſt conſequence to regulate theſe images by the ſtandard of nature and

The images of things, but paint in all
Their genuine hues, the features which they wore
In nature; there opinion will be true,
And action right. For action treads the path
In which opinion ſays he follows good,

Or

---

and the general good; otherwiſe the imagination, by heightening ſome objects beyond their real excellence and beauty, or by repreſenting others in a more odious or terrible ſhape than they deſerve, may of courſe engage us in purſuits utterly inconſiſtent with the moral order of things.

If it be objected that this account of things ſuppoſes the paſſions to be merely accidental, whereas there appears in ſome a natural and hereditary diſpoſition to certain paſſions prior to all circumſtances of education or fortune; it may be anſwer'd, that tho' no man is born *ambitious* or a *miſer*, yet he may inherit from his parents a peculiar temper or complexion of mind, which ſhall render his imagination more liable to be ſtruck with ſome particular objects, conſequently diſpoſe him to form opinions of good and ill, and entertain paſſions of a particular turn. Some men, for inſtance, by the original frame of their minds, are more delighted with the vaſt and magnificent, others on the contrary with the elegant and gentle aſpects of nature. And it is very remarkable, that the diſpoſition of the moral powers is always ſimilar to this of the imagination; that thoſe who are moſt inclin'd to admire prodigious and ſublime objects in the phyſical world, are alſo moſt inclined to applaud examples of

Or flies from evil; and opinion gives
Report of good or evil, as the ſcene
Was drawn by fancy, lovely or deform'd:
Thus her report can never there be true
Where fancy cheats the intellectual eye,
With glaring colours and diſtorted lines.

---

fortitude and heroic virtue in the moral. While thoſe who are charm'd rather with the *delicacy* and *ſweetneſs* of colours, and forms, and ſounds, never fail in like manner to yield the preference to the ſofter ſcenes of virtue and the ſympathies of a domeſtic life. And this is ſufficient to account for the objection.

Among the ancient philoſophers, tho' we have ſeveral hints concerning this influence of the imagination upon morals among the remains of the *Socratic* ſchool, yet the *Stoics* were the firſt who paid it a due attention. *Zeno*, their founder, thought it impoſſible to preſerve any tolerable regularity in life, without frequently inſpecting thoſe pictures or appearances of things, which the imagination offers to the mind (*Diog. Laert. l.* vii.) The meditations of *M. Aurelius*, and the diſcourſes of *Epictetus*, are full of the ſame ſentiments; inſomuch that the latter makes the Χρῆσις ὕλα δὲ φαντασιῶν, or *right management of the fancys*, the only thing for which we are accountable to providence, and without which a man is no other than ſtupid or frantic. *Arrian. l.* i. *c.* 12. & *l.* ii. *c.* 22. See alſo the Characteriſtics, vol. i. from p. 313, to p. 321. where this *Stoical* doctrine is embelliſhed with all the elegance and graces of *Plato*.

Is

Is there a man, who at the ſound of death
Sees ghaſtly ſhapes of terror conjur'd up,
And black before him; nought but death-bed groans
And fearful pray'rs, and plunging from the brink
Of light and being, down the gloomy air,
An unknown depth? Alas! in ſuch a mind,
If no bright forms of excellence attend
The image of his country; nor the pomp
Of ſacred ſenates, nor the ſacred voice
Of juſtice on her throne, nor aught that wakes
The conſcious boſom with a patriot's flame;
Will not opinion tell him, that to die,
Or ſtand the hazard, is a greater ill
Than to *betray* his countrey? And in act
Will he not chuſe to be a wretch and live?
Here vice begins then. From th' inchanting cup
Which fancy holds to all, th' unwary thirſt
Of youth oft ſwallows a Circæan draught,
That ſheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye
Of reaſon, 'till no longer he diſcerns,
And only guides to err. Then revel forth
A furious band that ſpurn him from the throne;

And all is uproar. Thus ambition graſps
The empire of the ſoul: thus pale revenge
Unſheaths her murd'rous dagger; and the hands
Of luſt and rapine, with unholy arts,
Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws
That keeps them from their prey: thus all the plagues
The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling ſcene
The tragic muſe diſcloſes, under ſhapes
Of honour, ſafety, pleaſure, eaſe or pomp,
Stole firſt into the mind. Yet not by all
Thoſe lying forms which fancy in the brain
Engenders, are the kindling paſſions driv'n
To guilty deeds; nor reaſon bound in chains,
That vice alone may lord it: oft adorn'd
With ſolemn pageants, folly mounts his throne,
And plays her idiot-anticks, like a queen.
A thouſand garbs ſhe wears; a thouſand ways
She wheels her giddy empire.—Lo! thus far
With bold adventure, to the Mantuan lyre
I ſing of nature's charms, and touch well-pleas'd
A ſtricter note: now haply muſt my ſong
Unbend her ſerious meaſure, and reveal

In

In lighter ſtrains, how folly's aukward arts
Excite impetuous laughter's gay rebuke;
The ſportive province of the comic muſe.

See! in what crouds the uncouth forms advance,
Each would outſtrip the other, each prevent
Our careful ſearch, and offer to your gaze,
Unaſk'd, his motley features. Wait awhile,
My curious friends! and let us firſt arrange
In proper orders your promiſcuous throng.

Behold the foremoſt band; of ſlender thought,
And eaſy faith; whom flatt'ring fancy ſooths
With

——— *how folly's aukward arts*, &c.] Notwithſtanding the general influence of *ridicule* on private and civil life, as well as on learning and the ſciences, it has been almoſt conſtantly neglected or miſrepreſented, by divines eſpecially. The manner of treating theſe ſubjects in the ſcience of human nature, ſhould be preciſely the ſame as in natural philoſophy; from particular facts to inveſtigate the ſtated order in which they appear, and then apply the general law, thus diſcovered, to the explication of other appearances and the improvement of uſeful arts.

Behold the foremoſt band, &c.] The firſt and moſt general ſource of ridicule in the characters of men, is vanity, or ſelf-

With lying ſpectres, in themſelves to view
Illuſtrious forms of excellence and good,
That ſcorn the manſion. With exulting hearts
They ſpread their ſpurious treaſures to the ſun,
And bid the world admire! but chief the glance
Of wiſhful envy draws their joy-bright eyes,
And lifts with ſelf-applauſe each lordly brow.
In number boundleſs as the blooms of ſpring,
Behold their glaring idols, empty ſhades
By fancy gilded o'er, and then ſet up
For adoration. Some in learning's garb,
With formal-band, and ſable-cinctur'd gown,
And rags of mouldy volumes. Some elate
With martial ſplendor, ſteely pikes and ſwords
Of coſtly frame, and gay Phœnician robes
Inwrought with flow'ry gold, aſſume the port
Of ſtately valour: liſt'ning by his ſide
There ſtands a female form; to her, with looks
Of earneſt import, pregnant with amaze,

---

applauſe for ſome deſirable quality or poſſeſſion which evidently does not belong to thoſe who aſſume it.

He

He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, ſtorms,
And ſulph'rous mines, and ambuſh: then at once
Breaks off, and ſmiles to ſee her look ſo pale,
And aſks ſome wond'ring queſtion of her fears.
Others of graver mien; behold, adorn'd
With holy enſigns, how ſublime they move,
And bending oft their ſanctimonious eyes,
Take homage of the ſimple-minded throng;
Ambaſſadors of heav'n! Nor much unlike
Is he whoſe viſage, in the lazy miſt
That mantles every feature, hides a brood
Of politic conceits; of whiſpers, nods,
And hints deep-omen'd with unwieldy ſchemes,
And dark portents of ſtate. Ten thouſand more,
Prodigious habits and tumultuous tongues,
Pour dauntleſs in and ſwell the boaſtful band.

Then comes the ſecond order; all who ſeek
The debt of praiſe, where watchful unbelief

Darts

Then comes the ſecond order, &c.] Ridicule from the ſame vanity, where tho' the poſſeſſion be real, yet no merit can ariſe from

Darts thro' the thin pretence her ſquinting eye
On ſome retir'd appearance which belies
The boaſted virtue, or annuls th' applauſe
That juſtice elſe wou'd pay. Here ſide by ſide
I ſee two leaders of the ſolemn train
Approaching: one a female old and grey,
With eyes demure, and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,
Pale as the cheeks of death; yet ſtill ſhe ſtuns
The ſick'ning audience with a nauſeous tale;
How many youths her myrtle chains have worn,
How many virgins at her triumphs pin'd!
Yet how reſolv'd ſhe guards her cautious heart;
Such is her terror at the riſques of love,
And man's ſeducing tongue! The other ſeems
A bearded ſage, ungentle in his mien,
And ſordid all his habit; peeviſh want
Grins at his heels, while down the gazing throng
He ſtalks, reſounding in magnific phraſe

---

from it, becauſe of ſome particular circumſtances, which, tho' obvious to the ſpectator, are yet overlook'd by the ridiculous character.

The vanity of riches, the contempt
Of pomp and pow'r. Be prudent in your zeal,
Ye grave aſſociates! let the ſilent grace
Of her who bluſhes at the fond regard
Her charms inſpire, more eloquent unfold
The praiſe of ſpotleſs honour: let the man
Whoſe eye regards not his illuſtrious pomp
And ample ſtore, but as indulgent ſtreams
To chear the barren ſoil and ſpread the fruits
Of joy, let him by juſter meaſures fix
The price of riches and the end of pow'r.

Another tribe ſucceeds; deluded long
By fancy's dazling optics, theſe behold
The images of ſome peculiar things
With brighter hues reſplendent, and portray'd
With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd
Their genuine objects. Hence the fever'd heart

Another tribe ſucceeds, &c.] Ridicule from a notion of excellence in particular objects diſproportion'd to their intrinſic value, and inconſiſtent with the order of nature.

Pants

Pants with delirious hope for tinſel charms;
Hence oft obſtruſive on the eye of ſcorn,
Untimely zeal her witleſs pride betrays;
And ſerious manhood from the tow'ring aim
Of wiſdom, ſtoops to emulate the boaſt
Of childiſh toil. Behold yon myſtic form,
Bedeck'd with feathers, inſects, weeds and ſhells!
Not with intenſer view the Samian ſage
Bent his fixt eye on heav'n's intenſer fires,
When firſt the order of that radiant ſcene
Swell'd his exulting thought, than this ſurveys
A muckworm's entrails or a ſpider's fang.
Next him a youth, with flow'rs and myrtles crown'd,
Attends that virgin form, and bluſhing kneels,
With fondeſt geſture and a ſuppliant's tongue,
To win her coy regard: adieu, for him,
The dull ingagements of the buſtling world!
Adieu the ſick impertinence of praiſe!
And hope, and action! for with her alone,
By ſtreams and ſhades, to ſteal the ſighing hours,
Is all he aſks, and all that fate can give!
Thee too, facetious Momion, wand'ring here,

Thee,

Thee, dreaded cenſor, oft have I beheld
Bewilder'd unawares: alas! too long
Fluſh'd with thy comic triumphs and the ſpoils
Of ſly deriſion! till on every ſide
Hurling thy random bolts, offended truth
Aſſign'd thee here thy ſtation with the ſlaves
Of folly. Thy once formidable name
Shall grace her humble records, and be heard
In ſcoffs and mock'ry bandied from the lips
Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,
So oft the patient victims of thy ſcorn.

But now, ye gay! to whom indulgent fate,
Of all the muſe's empire hath aſſign'd
The fields of folly, hither each advance
Your ſickles; here the teeming ſoil affords
Its richeſt growth. A fav'rite brood appears;
In whom the dæmon, with a mother's joy,

But now, ye gay, &c.] Ridicule from a notion of excellence, when the object is abſolutely odious or contemptible. This is the higheſt degree of the ridiculous; as in the affectation of diſeaſes or vices.

Views

Views all her charms reflected, all her cares
At full repay'd. Ye moſt illuſtrious band!
Who ſcorning reaſon's plain, pedantic rules,
And order's vulgar bondage, never meant
For ſouls ſublime as yours, with generous zeal
Pay vice the rev'rence virtue long uſurp'd,
And yield deformity the fond applauſe
Which beauty wont to claim; forgive my ſong,
That for the bluſhing diffidence of youth,
It ſhuns th' unequal province of your praiſe.

Thus far triumphant in the pleaſing guile
Of bland imagination, folly's train
Have dar'd our ſearch: but now a daſtard-kind
Advance reluctant, and with fault'ring feet
Shrink from the gazer's eye: infeebled hearts,
Whom fancy chills with viſionary fears,
Or bends to ſervile tameneſs with conceits
Of ſhame, of evil, or of baſe defect,

Thus far triumphant, &c.] Ridicule from falſe ſhame or groundleſs fear.

Fantaſtic

Fantaſtic and deluſive. Here the ſlave
Who droops abaſh'd when ſullen pomp ſurveys
His humbler habit; here the trembling wretch
Unnerv'd and ſtruck with terror's icy bolts,
Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in ſhameful tears,
At every dream of danger: here ſubdued
By frontleſs laughter and the hardy ſcorn
Of old, unfeeling vice, the abject ſoul,
Who bluſhing half reſigns the candid praiſe
Of temperance and honour; half diſowns
A freeman's hatred of tyrannic pride;
And hears with ſickly ſmiles the venal mouth
With fouleſt licence mock the patriot's name.

Laſt of the motley bands on whom the pow'r
Of gay deriſion bends her hoſtile aim,
Is that where ſhameful ignorance preſides.
Beneath her ſordid banners, lo! they march,
Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful hands

Laſt of the, &c.] Ridicule from the ignorance of ſuch things as our circumſtances require us to know.

Attempt,

Attempt, confuſion ſtraight appears behind,
And troubles all the work. Thro' many a maze,
Perplex'd they ſtruggle, changing every path,
O'erturning every purpoſe; then at laſt
Sit down diſmay'd, and leave th' entangled ſcene
For ſcorn to ſport with. Such then is th' abode
Of folly in the mind; and ſuch the ſhapes
In which ſhe governs her obſequious train.

Thro' ev'ry ſcene of ridicule in things
To lead the tenour of my devious lay;
Thro' every ſwift occaſion which the hand
Of laughter points at, when the mirthful ſting
Diſtends her ſallying nerves and choaks her tongue;
What were it but to count each cryſtal drop
Which morning's dewy fingers on the blooms
Of May diſtil? Suffice it to have ſaid,

——*Suffice it to have ſaid*, &c.] By comparing theſe general ſources of ridicule with each other, and examining the ridiculous in other objects, we may obtain a general definition of it equally applicable to every ſpecies. The moſt important circumſtance of this definition is laid down in the lines referr'd to; but others more minute we ſhall ſubjoin here. *Ariſtotle*'s account of the

Where'er the power of ridicule diſplays
Her quaint-ey'd viſage, ſome incongruous form,
Some ſtubborn diſſonance of things combin'd,
Strikes on the quick obſerver: whether pomp,

---

the matter ſeems both imperfect and falſe; τὸ γὰρ γελοῖον, ſays he, ἔστιν ἁμάρτημά τι καὶ αἶσχος, ἀνώδυνον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν: *the ridiculous is ſome certain fault or turpitude without pain, and not deſtructive to its ſubject.* (*Poet. c.* 5.) For allowing it to be true, as it is not, that the ridiculous is never accompany'd with pain, yet we might produce many inſtances of ſuch a fault or turpitude which cannot with any tolerable propriety be called ridiculous. So that the definition does not diſtinguiſh the thing defined. Nay farther, even when we perceive the turpitude tending to the deſtruction of its ſubject, we may ſtill be ſenſible of a ridiculous appearance, till the ruin become imminent and the keener ſenſations of pity or terror baniſh the ludicrous apprehenſion from our minds. For the ſenſation of ridicule is not a bare perception of the agreement or diſagreement of ideas; but a paſſion or emotion of the mind conſequential to that perception. So that the mind may perceive the agreement or diſagreement, and yet not feel the ridiculous, becauſe it is engroſſed by a more violent emotion. Thus it happens that ſome men think thoſe objects ridiculous, to which others cannot endure to apply the name; becauſe in them they excite a much intenſer and more important feeling. And this difference, among other cauſes, has brought a good deal of confuſion into this queſtion.

That which makes objects ridiculous, is ſome ground of admiration or eſteem connected with other more general circumſtances compa-

Or praiſe, or beauty mix their partial claim
Where ſordid faſhions, where ignoble deeds,
Where foul deformity are wont to dwell,
Or whether theſe with violation loath'd,

---

ratively worthleſs or deformed; or it is ſome circumſtance of turpitude or deformity connected with what is in general excellent or beautiful: the inconſiſtent properties exiſting either in the objects themſelves, or in the apprehenſion of the perſon to whom they relate; belonging always to the ſame order or claſs of being; implying ſentiment or deſign; and exciting no acute or vehement emotion of the heart.

To prove the ſeveral parts of this definition: *The appearance of excellence or beauty connected with a general condition comparatively ſordid or deformed,* is ridiculous: for inſtance, pompous pretenſions of wiſdom join'd with ignorance or folly in the *Socrates* of *Ariſtophanes*; and the oſtentation of military glory with cowardice and ſtupidity in the *Thraſo* of *Terence*.

The appearance of deformity or turpitude in conjunction with what is in general excellent or venerable, is alſo ridiculous: for inſtance, the perſonal weakneſſes of a magiſtrate appearing in the ſolemn and public functions of his ſtation.

The incongruous properties may either exiſt in the objects themſelves, or in apprehenſion of the perſon to whom they relate: in the laſt-mentioned inſtance they both exiſt in the objects; in the inſtances from *Ariſtophanes* and *Terence*, one of them is objective and real, the other only founded in the apprehenſion of the ridiculous character.

The inconſiſtent properties muſt belong to the ſame order or claſs of being. A coxcomb in fine cloaths bedaubed by accident in foul weather,

Invade reſplendent pomp's imperious mien,
The charms of beauty, or the boaſt of praiſe.
Aſk we for what fair end, th' almighty ſire
In mortal boſoms wakes this gay contempt,

---

weather, is a ridiculous object; becauſe his general apprehenſion of excellence and eſteem is referr'd to the ſplendour and expence of his dreſs. A man of ſenſe and merit in the ſame circumſtances, is not counted ridiculous; becauſe the general ground of excellence and eſteem in him, is, both in fact and in his own apprehenſion, of a very different ſpecies.

Every ridiculous object implies ſentiment or deſign. A column placed by an architect without a capital or baſe, is laughed at: the ſame column in a ruin cauſes a very different ſenſation.

And laſtly, *the occurrence muſt excite no acute or vehement emotion of the heart,* ſuch as terror, pity, or indignation; for in that caſe, as was obſerved above, the mind is not at leiſure to contemplate the ridiculous.

Whether any appearance not ridiculous be involved in this deſcription, and whether it comprehend every ſpecies and form of the ridiculous, muſt be determined by repeated applications of it to particular inſtances.

Aſk we for what fair end, &c.] Since it is beyond all contradiction evident that we have a *natural* ſenſe or feeling of the ridiculous, and ſince ſo good a reaſon may be aſſign'd to juſtify the ſupreme being for beſtowing it; one cannot without aſtoniſhment reflect on the conduct of thoſe men who imagine it is for the ſervice of true religion to vilify and blacken it without diſtinction, and endeavour to perſuade us that it is never applied but in a bad cauſe. Ridicule is not concerned with mere ſpecu-

Theſe grateful ſtings of laughter, from diſguſt
Educing pleaſure? Wherefore, but to aid
The tardy ſteps of reaſon, and at once
By this prompt impulſe urge us to depreſs

---

lative truth or falſehoed. It is not in abſtract propoſitions or theorems, but in actions and paſſions, good and evil, beauty and deformity, that we find materials for it; and all theſe terms are *relative*, implying approbation or blame. To aſk then whether *ridicule be a teſt of truth*, is, in other words, to aſk whether that which is ridiculous can be *morally true*, can be juſt and becoming; or whether that which is juſt and becoming, can be ridiculous. A queſtion that does not deſerve a ſerious anſwer. For it is moſt evident, that as in a metaphyſical propoſition offered to the underſtanding for its aſſent, the faculty of reaſon examines the terms of the propoſition, and finding one idea which was ſuppoſed equal to another, to be in fact unequal, of conſequence rejects the propoſition as a falſehood; ſo in objects offer'd to the mind for its eſteem or applauſe, the faculty of ridicule finding an incongruity in the claim, urges the mind to reject it with laughter and contempt. When therefore we obſerve ſuch a claim obtruded upon mankind, and the inconſiſtent circumſtances carefully concealed from the eye of the public, it is our buſineſs, if the matter be of importance to ſociety, to drag out thoſe latent circumſtances, and by ſetting them in full view, to convince the world how ridiculous the claim is; and thus a double advantage is gained; for we both detect the *moral falſehood* ſooner than in the way of ſpeculative inquiry, and impreſs the minds of men with a ſtronger ſenſe of the vanity and error of its authors. And this and no more is meant by the application of ridicule.

But

The giddy aims of folly? Tho' the light
Of truth ſlow-dawning on the' inquiring mind,
At length unfolds, thro' many a ſubtile tie,
How theſe uncouth diſorders end at laſt

But it is ſaid, the practice is dangerous, and may be inconſiſtent with the regard we owe to objects of real dignity and excellence. I anſwer, the practice fairly managed can never be dangerous; men may be diſhoneſt in obtruding circumſtances foreign to the ſubject, and we may be inadvertent in allowing thoſe circumſtances to impoſe upon us; but the ſenſe of ridicule always judges right. The *Socrates* of *Ariſtophanes* is as *truly* ridiculous a character as ever was drawn.—True; but it is not the character of *Socrates*, the divine moraliſt and father of ancient wiſdom. What then? did the ridicule of the poet hinder the philoſopher from detecting and diſclaiming thoſe foreign circumſtances which he had falſely introduced into his character, and thus rendering the ſatiriſt doubly ridiculous in his turn? No; but it nevertheleſs had an ill influence on the minds of the people. And ſo has the reaſoning of *Spinoza* made many atheiſts; he has founded it indeed on ſuppoſitions utterly falſe, but allow him theſe, and his concluſions are unavoidably true. And if we muſt reject the uſe of ridicule, becauſe by the impoſition of falſe circumſtances, things may be made to ſeem ridiculous, which are not ſo in themſelves; why we ought not in the ſame manner to reject the uſe of reaſon, becauſe by proceeding on falſe principles, concluſions will appear true which are impoſſible in nature, let the vehement and obſtinate declaimers againſt ridicule determine.

In public evil! yet benignant heav'n,
Conſcious how dim the dawn of truth appears
To thouſands; conſcious what a ſcanty pauſe
From labours and from care, the wider lot
Of humble life affords for ſtudious thought
To ſcan the maze of nature; therefore ſtamp'd
The glaring ſcenes with characters of ſcorn
As broad, as obvious to the paſſing clown,
As to the letter'd ſage's curious eye.

Such are the various aſpects of the mind—
Some heav'nly genius, whoſe unclouded thoughts
Attain that ſecret harmony which blends
Th' æthereal ſpirit with its mold of clay;
O! teach me to reveal the grateful charm
That ſearchleſs nature o'er the ſenſe of man
Diffuſes, to behold, in lifeleſs things,
The inexpreſſive ſemblance of himſelf,
Of thought and paſſion. Mark the ſable woods

The inexpreſſive ſemblance, &c.] This ſimilitude is the foundation of almoſt all the ornaments of poetic diction.

That

That ſhade ſublime yon mountain's nodding brow;
With what religious awe the ſolemn ſcene
Commands your ſteps! as if the reverend form
Of Minos or of Numa ſhould forſake
Th' Elyſian ſeats, and down th' imbow'ring glade
Move to your pauſing eye! Behold th' expanſe
Of yon gay landſcape, where the ſilver clouds
Flit o'er the heav'ns before the ſprightly breeze:
Now their grey cincture ſkirts the doubtful ſun;
Now ſtreams of ſplendor, thro' their opening veil
Effulgent, ſweep from off the gilded lawn
Th' aerial ſhadows; on the curling brook,
And on the ſhady margin's quiv'ring leaves
With quickeſt luſtre glancing; while you view
The proſpect, ſay, within your chearful breaſt
Plays not the lively ſenſe of winning mirth
With clouds and ſunſhine chequer'd, while the round
Of ſocial converſe, to th' inſpiring tongue
Of ſome gay nymph amid her ſubject train,
Moves all obſequious? Whence is this effect,
This kindred pow'r of ſuch diſcordant things?
Or flows their ſemblance from that myſtic tone

To which the new-born mind's harmonious pow'rs
At firſt were ſtrung? Or rather from the links
Which artful cuſtom twines around her frame?

For when the diff'rent images of things
By chance combin'd, have ſtruck th' attentive ſoul
With deeper impulſe, or connected long,
Have drawn her frequent eye; howe'er diſtinct
Th' external ſcenes, yet oft th' ideas gain
From that conjunction an eternal tie,
And ſympathy unbroken. Let the mind
Recall one partner of the various league,
Immediate, lo! the firm confed'rates riſe,
And each his former ſtation ſtrait reſumes:
One movement governs the conſenting throng,
And all at once with roſy pleaſure ſhine,
Or all are ſadden'd with the glooms of care.
'Twas thus, if ancient fame the truth unfold,
Two faithful needles, from th' informing touch

Two faithful needles, &c.] See the elegant poem recited by Cardinal *Bembo* in the character of *Lucretius*; *Strada Proluſ.* vi. *Academ.* 2. *c.* 5.

Of

Of the ſame parent-ſtone, together drew
Its myſtic virtue, and at firſt conſpir'd
With fatal impulſe quiv'ring to the pole:
Then, tho' disjoin'd by kingdoms, tho' the main
Rowl'd its broad ſurge betwixt, and diff'rent ſtars
Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preſerv'd
The former friendſhip, and remember'd ſtill
Th' alliance of their birth: whate'er the line
Which once poſſeſs'd, nor pauſe, nor quiet knew
The ſure aſſociate, ere with trembling ſpeed
He found its path and fix'd unerring there.
Such is the ſecret union, when we feel
A ſong, a flow'r, a name at once reſtore
Thoſe long-connected ſcenes where firſt they mov'd
Th' attention; backward thro' her mazy walks
Guiding her wanton fancy to her ſcope,
To temples, courts or fields; with all the bands
Of painted forms, of paſſions and deſigns
Attendant: whence, if pleaſing in itſelf,
The proſpect from that ſweet acceſſion gains
Redoubled influence o'er the liſt'ning mind.

By theſe myſterious ties the buſy pow'r
Of mem'ry her ideal train preſerves
Intire; or when they would elude her watch,
Reclaims her fleeting footſteps from the waſte
Of dark oblivion; thus collecting all
The various forms of being to preſent,
Before the curious aim of mimic art,
Their largeſt choice: like ſpring's unfolded blooms
Exhaling ſweetneſs, that the ſkillful bee
May taſte at will, from their ſelected ſpoils
To work her dulcet food. For not th' expanſe
Of living lakes in ſummer's noontide calm,
Reflects the bord'ring ſhade and ſun-bright heav'ns
With fairer ſemblance; not the ſculptur'd gold
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,
Than he whoſe birth the ſiſter-pow'rs of art
Propitious view'd, and from his genial ſtar
Shed influence to the ſeeds of fancy kind;
Than his attemper'd boſom muſt preſerve

The

By theſe myſterious ties, &c.] The act of remembering ſeems almoſt wholly to depend on the aſſociation of ideas.

The ſeal of nature. There alone unchang'd,
Her form remains. The balmy walks of May
There breathe perennial ſweets: the trembling chord
Reſounds for ever in th' abſtracted ear,
Melodious: and the virgin's radiant eye,
Superior to diſeaſe, to grief, and time,
Shines with unbating luſtre. Thus at length
Indow'd with all that nature can beſtow,
The child of fancy oft in ſilence bends
O'er theſe mixt treaſures of his pregnant breaſt,
With conſcious pride. From them he oft reſolves
To frame he knows not what excelling things;
And win he knows not what ſublime reward
Of praiſe and wonder. By degrees the mind
Feels her young nerves dilate: the plaſtic pow'rs
Labour for action: blind emotions heave
His boſom; and with lovelieſt frenzy caught,
From earth to heav'n he rolls his daring eye,
From heav'n to earth. Anon ten thouſand ſhapes,
Like ſpectres trooping to the wiſard's call,
Flit ſwift before him. From the womb of earth,
From ocean's bed they come: th' eternal heav'ns

Diſcloſe

Diſcloſe their ſplendors, and the dark abyſs
Pours out her birth unknown. With fixed gaze
He marks the riſing phantoms. Now compares
Their diff'rent forms; now blends them, now divides;
Inlarges and extenuates by turns;
Oppoſes, ranges in fantaſtic bands,
And infinitely varies. Hither now,
How thither fluctuates his inconſtant aim,
With endleſs choice perplex'd. At length his plan
Begins to open. Lucid order dawns;
And as from Chaos old the jarring ſeeds
Of nature at the voice divine repair'd
Each to its place, till roſy earth unveil'd
Her fragrant boſom, and the joyful ſun
Sprung up the blue ſerene; by ſwift degrees
Thus diſentangled, his entire deſign
Emerges. Colours mingle, features join,
And lines converge: the fainter parts retire;
The fairer eminent in light advance;
And every image on its neighbour ſmiles.
A while he ſtands, and with a father's joy
Contemplates. Then with Promethéan art,

Into

Into its proper vehicle he breathes
The fair conception; which imbodied thus,
And permanent, becomes to eyes or ears
An object aſcertain'd: while thus inform'd,
The various organs of his mimic ſkill,
The conſonance of ſounds, the featur'd rock,
The ſhadowy picture and impaſſion'd verſe,
Beyond their proper pow'rs attract the ſoul
By that expreſſive ſemblance, while in ſight
Of nature's great original we ſcan
The lively child of art; while line by line,
And feature after feature we refer
To that ſublime exemplar whence it ſtole
Thoſe animating charms. Thus beauty's palm
Betwixt 'em wav'ring hangs: applauding love
Doubts where to chuſe; and mortal man aſpires
To tempt creative praiſe. As when a cloud
Of gath'ring hail with limpid cruſts of ice

Into its proper vehicle, &c.] This relates to the different ſorts of corporeal mediums, by which the ideas of the artiſts are render'd palpable to the ſenſes; as by ſounds, in muſic; by lines and ſhadows, in painting; by diction, in poetry, *&c.*

Inclos'd

Inclos'd and obvious to the beaming ſun,
Collects his large effulgence; ſtrait the heav'ns
With equal flames preſent on either hand
The radiant viſage: Perſia ſtands at gaze,
Appall'd; and on the brink of Ganges doubts
The ſnowy-veſted ſeer, in Mithra's name,
To which the fragrance of the ſouth ſhall burn,
To which his warbled oriſons aſcend.

Such various bliſs the well-tun'd heart enjoys,
Favour'd of heav'n! While plung'd in ſordid cares,
Th' unfeeling vulgar mocks the boon divine:
And harſh auſterity, from whoſe rebuke
Young love and ſmiling wonder ſhrink away,
Abaſh'd and chill of heart, with ſager frowns
Condemns the fair inchantment. On my ſtrain,
Perhaps ev'n now, ſome cold, faſtidious judge
Caſts a diſdainful eye; and calls my toil,
And calls the love and duty which I ſing,
The dream of folly. Thou grave cenſor! ſay,
Is beauty then a dream, becauſe the glooms
Of dulneſs hang too heavy on thy ſenſe

To

To let her ſhine upon thee? So the man
Whoſe eye ne'er open'd on the light of heav'n,
Might ſmile with ſcorn while raptur'd viſion tells
Of the gay-colour'd radiance flufhing bright
O'er all creation. From the wiſe be far
Such groſs, unhallow'd pride; nor needs my ſong
Deſcend ſo low; but rather now unfold,
If human thought could reach, or words unfold,
By what myſterious fabric of the mind,
The deep-felt joys and harmony of ſound
Reſult from airy motion; and from ſhape
The lovely phantoms of ſublime and fair.
By what fine ties hath God connected things
When preſent in the mind; which in themſelves
Have no connection? Sure the riſing ſun,
O'er the cærulean convex of the ſea,
With equal brightneſs and with equal warmth
Might rowl his fiery orb; nor yet the ſoul
Thus feel her frame expanded, and her pow'rs
Exulting in the ſplendor ſhe beholds;
Like a young conqu'ror moving thro' the pomp
Of ſome triumphal day. When join'd at eve,

Soft-

Soft-murm'ring ſtreams and gales of gentleſt breath
Melodious Philomela's wakeful ſtrain
Attemper, could not man's diſcerning ear
Thro' all its tones the ſymphony purſue;
Nor yet this breath divine of nameleſs joy
Steal thro' his veins and fan th' awaken'd heart,
Mild as the breeze, yet rapt'rous as the ſong?

But were not nature ſtill indow'd at large
With all which life requires, tho' unadorn'd
With ſuch inchantment? Wherefore then her form
So exquiſitely fair? her breath perfum'd
With ſuch æthereal ſweetneſs? whence her voice
Inform'd at will to raiſe or to depreſs
Th' impaſſion'd ſoul? and whence the robes of light
Which thus inveſt her with more lovely pomp
Than fancy can deſcribe? Whence but from thee,
O ſource divine of ever-flowing love,
And thy unmeaſur'd goodneſs? Not content
With every food of life to nouriſh man,
By kind illuſions of the wond'ring ſenſe
Thou mak'ſt all nature beauty to his eye,

Or

Or muſic to his ear: well-pleas'd he ſcans
The goodly proſpect; and with inward ſmiles
Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain;
Behold the azure canopy of heav'n,
And living lamps that over-arch his head
With more than regal ſplendor; bends his ears
To the full choir of water, air, and earth;
Nor heeds the pleaſing error of his thought,
Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,
Nor queſtions more the muſic's mingling ſounds
Than ſpace, or motion, or eternal time:
So ſweet he feels their influence to attract
The fixed ſoul; to brighten the dull glooms
Of care, and make the deſtin'd road of life
Delightful to his feet. So fables tell,
Th' adv'ntrous heroe, bound on hard exploits,
Beholds with glad ſurpriſe, by ſecret ſpells
Of ſome kind ſage, the patron of his toils,
A viſionary paradiſe diſclos'd
Amid the dubious wild: with ſtreams, and ſhades,
And airy ſongs, th' enchanted landſcape ſmiles,
Chears his long labours and renews his frame.

What then is taſte, but theſe internal pow'rs
Active, and ſtrong, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulſe? a diſcerning ſenſe
Of decent and ſublime, with quick diſguſt
From things deform'd, or diſarrang'd, or groſs
In ſpecies? This, nor gems, nor ſtores of gold,
Nor purple ſtate, nor culture can beſtow;
But God alone, when firſt his active hand
Imprints the ſacred byaſs of the ſoul.
He, mighty parent! wiſe and juſt in all,
Free as the vital breeze or light of heav'n,
Reveals the charms of nature Aſk the ſwain
Who journeys homeward from a ſummer day's
Long labour, why, forgetful of his toils
And due repoſe, he loiters to behold
The ſunſhine gleaming as thro' amber clouds,
O'er all the weſtern ſky; full ſoon, I ween,
His rude expreſſion and untutor'd airs,
Beyond the pow'r of language, will unfold
The form of beauty ſmiling at his heart,
How lovely! how commanding! But tho' heav'n

In

In every breaſt hath ſown theſe early ſeeds
Of love and admiration, yet in vain,
Without fair culture's kind parental aid,
Without inlivening ſuns, and genial ſhow'rs,
And ſhelter from the blaſt, in vain we hope
The tender plant ſhould rear its blooming head,
Or yield the harveſt promis'd in its ſpring.
Nor yet will every ſoil with equal ſtores
Repay the tiller's labour; or attend
His will, obſequious, whether to produce
The olive or the laurel. Diff'rent minds
Incline to diff'rent objects: one purſues
The vaſt alone, the wonderful, the wild;
Another ſighs for harmony, and grace,
And gentleſt beauty. Hence when lightning fires
The arch of heav'n, and thunders rock the ground;
When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
And ocean, groaning from his loweſt bed,
Heaves his tempeſtuous billows to the ſky;

—— *One purſues*
The vaſt alone, &c.] See the note to ver. 18 of this book.

Amid the mighty uproar, while below
The nations tremble, Shakeſpear looks abroad
From ſome high cliff, ſuperior, and enjoys
The elemental war. But Waller longs,
All on the margin of ſome flow'ry ſtream
To ſpread his careleſs limbs amid the cool
Of plantane ſhades, and to the liſt'ning deer,
The tale of ſlighted vows and love's diſdain
Reſounds ſoft-warbling all the live-long day:
Conſenting Zephyr ſighs; the weeping rill
Joins in his plaint, melodious; mute the groves;
And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.
Such and ſo various are the taſtes of men.

Waller longs, &c.]

O! how I long my careleſs limbs to lay
Under the plantane ſhade; and all the day
With am'rous airs my fancy entertain, &c.

WALLER, Battle of the Summer-Iſlands, Canto I.

And again,

While in the park I ſing, the liſt'ning deer
Attend my paſſion and forget to fear, &c.

At *Pens-hurſt.*

Oh!

Oh! bleſt of heav'n, whom not the languid ſongs
Of luxury, the Siren! not the bribes
Of ſordid wealth, nor all the gaudy ſpoils
Of pageant honour can ſeduce to leave
Thoſe ever-blooming ſweets, which from the ſtore
Of nature fair imagination culls
To charm th' enliven'd ſoul! What tho' not all
Of mortal offspring can attain the height
Of envied life; tho' only few poſſeſs
Patrician treaſures or imperial ſtate;
Yet nature's care, to all her children juſt,
With richer treaſures and an ampler ſtate
Indows at large whatever happy man
Will deign to uſe them. His the city's pomp,
The rural honours his. Whate'er adorns
The princely dome, the column and the arch,
The breathing marbles and the ſculptur'd gold,
Beyond the proud poſſeſſor's narrow claim,
His tuneful breaſt injoys. For him, the ſpring
Diſtills her dews, and from the ſilken gem
Its lucid leaves unfolds: for him, the hand

Of

Of autumn tinges every fertile branch
With blooming gold and bluſhes like the morn.
Each paſſing hour ſheds tribute from her wings;
And ſtill new beauties meet his lonely walk,
And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze
Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
The ſetting ſun's effulgence, not a ſtrain
From all the tenants of the warbling ſhade

—— *Not a breeze*, &c.] That this account may not appear rather poetically extravagant than juſt in philoſophy, it may be proper to produce the ſentiment of one of the greateſt, wiſeſt, and beſt of men on this head; one ſo little to be ſuſpected of partiality in the caſe, that he reckons it among thoſe favours for which he was eſpecially thankful to the gods, that they had not ſuffered him to make any great proficiency in the arts of eloquence and poetry, leſt by that means he ſhould have been diverted from purſuits of more importance to his high ſtation. Speaking of the beauty of univerſal nature, he obſerves, that there *is a pleaſing and graceful aſpect in every object we perceive*, when once we conſider its connection with that general order. He inſtances in many things which at firſt ſight would be thought rather deformities, and then adds, *that a man who enjoys a ſenſibility of temper with a juſt comprehenſion of the univerſal order —will diſcern many amiable things, not credible to every mind, but to thoſe alone who have entered into an honourable familiarity with nature and her works.* M. Antonin. iii. 2.

Aſcends,

Aſcends, but whence his boſom can partake
Freſh pleaſure, unreprov'd. Nor thence partakes
Freſh pleaſure only: for th' attentive mind,
By this harmonious action on her pow'rs,
Becomes herſelf harmonious: wont ſo oft
In outward things to meditate the charm
Of ſacred order, ſoon ſhe ſeeks at home
To find a kindred order, to exert
Within herſelf this elegance of love,
This fair-inſpir'd delight: her temper'd pow'rs
Refine at length, and every paſſion wears
A chaſter, milder, more attractive mien.
But if to ampler proſpects, if to gaze
On nature's form where negligent of all
Theſe leſſer graces, ſhe aſſumes the port
Of that eternal majeſty that weigh'd
The world's foundations, if to theſe the mind
Exalts her daring eye; then mightier far
Will be the change, and nobler. Would the forms
Of ſervile cuſtom cramp her gen'rous pow'rs?
Would ſordid policies, the barb'rous growth
Of ignorance and rapine, bow her down

To tame purſuits, to indolence and fear?
Lo! ſhe appeals to nature, to the winds
And rowling waves, the ſun's unwearied courſe,
The elements and ſeaſons: all declare
For what th' eternal maker has ordain'd
The pow'rs of man: we feel within ourſelves
His energy divine: he tells the heart,
He meant, he made us to behold and love
What he beholds and loves, the general orb
Of life and being; to be great like him,
Beneficent and active. Thus the men
Whom nature's works can charm, with GOD himſelf
Hold converſe; grow familiar, day by day,
With his conceptions, act upon his plan;
And form to his, the reliſh of their ſouls.

FINIS.